Issue 157 4 March 1995

CBW

Coach and Bus Week

The PSV industry's news weekly

22 PAGE CLASSIFIED BONANZA THIS WEEK

AN AUTOMATIC CHOICE

Expressliner II makes the selection easy

First low-floor midi arrives Page 11

Ellen Smith goes Continental Page 28

On safari with Stagecoach Page 36

King moves to Urquhart Page 63

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of
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The PSV industry's news weekly

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EXCITING changes this week transform *Coach and Bus Week* into an even better market leading magazine for the PSV industry. We have responded to what you, the reader, have told us you want. And we hope you like it.

By the time you have turned to this page you will have already noticed the new look. But we wanted more than just a different design and modern logo.

From an operator's point of view it is the equivalent of a change of image with fresh livery and revamped vinyls. As with any PSV operation, such efforts are wasted unless accompanied by a package of measures improving the service to the customer. This we have done.

Our new look and added value celebrate our third anniversary - yes, check the issue number on the front page, it is three years since the first *Coach and Bus Week*.

Instead of one publication we now have three.

This week you receive, *Coach Tours and Excursions*, the first of a new monthly supplement devoted to the needs of the coach tour operator. And, in recognition of the massive restructuring that has hit the industry during the past 18 months, *Coach and Bus Week* is proud to launch, *Transit*, a fortnightly management newsletter for bus and light rail professionals only available on subscription after the first three copies.

Much of *Coach and Bus Week* remains familiar. We bring you authoritative road tests and profiles while retaining the ever popular Marksman. Licensing and Legal moves closer to the front.

News coverage, already the best, is even better with space for more stories about the smaller operators. In addition we introduce a Deals and Dealers section giving details of the latest orders and fleet additions.

And we give you the biggest and best marketplace for your new and used vehicles - 22 pages of classified this week.

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events

14 March: CIT - Sir Christopher Foster presents the 50th Henry Spurrier Lecture. Royal Society of Arts, 8 John Adam Street, London. Phone Lorraine King on 0171 636 9952 or fax 0171 637 0511

14-19 March: *Coach and Bus Week* six-day study tour to the USA. Details from Paul Tappin on 01235 812127, fax 01235 837673

20 March: CIT - Frederick Speight Lecture - A Comparison of Bus and Coach Operations in the UK and EEC; and What of the Future? James Isaac, UITP president. Wolfson College, Oxford at 6.15pm for 6.45pm. Tel George Byers on 01734 472985

22-23 March: British Travel Trade Fair, NEC, Birmingham. Ticket hotline on 01203 715263

23-24 March: The Nottingham Transport Conference 1995 — Quality Transport for the New Planning Environment. University of Nottingham. Details on 01865 842042

3-4 April: LPG — A Clean and Efficient Motor Fuel, combined conference and trade fair at the MECC, Maastricht, Netherlands. Details on 010 31 55 78 66 40, fax 78 56 83.

4-6 April: 26th Annual Public Transport Symposium, 'Public Transport - Private Profit?' Details from Mrs Lynda Morgan, TORG, Claremont Tower, University of Newcastle Upon Tyne, tel 0191 222 7683

8 April: Pembrokeshire Passenger Vehicle Operators Association, 25th anniversary dinner and dance, Nantyffin Motel, Ilandissilio. Details from F Elfed Lewis on 01994 240274

20 April: Buses Worldwide meeting, Fred Tallent hall, Drummond St, Euston, London NW1. Andy Izatt on Uraguay. Details from Ian Johnson on 01252 617408

▼ Coach

Malta operators go on vehicle-buying spree

Need to replace up to 70 coaches for the 1995 season

by Mike Morgan

RELAXED regulations and increased demand for coach tours in Malta have forced operators into a buying spree. Maltese operators need to replace up to 70 coaches for 1995.

Last year they were forced to use their famous green service buses on tour work and maximum length for coaches on the island has increased from 11 metres to 12 metres. However, imported coaches must be less than four years old.

Armed with the *Coach and Bus Week* Guide a group of seven Maltese operators, including Reno Abela of Supreme Travel, headed for the UK at the turn of the year and returned with 10 late-model 12-metre coaches. Other operators of the famous blue touring coaches are to take new vehicles from Spain and Egypt for the Summer but Mr Abela said he was to return to the UK later this month.

Already Mr Abela sourced four coaches on his tour of UK operators, including two Plaxton Paramount-bodied Leyland Tigers from Alpha Coaches in Hull

Craig Porteous of Alpha said he had a different pair of Tigers advertised in *Coach and Bus Week* but the Maltese were in search of younger vehicles. "He twisted my arm," said Mr Porteous, "and persuaded me to part with 1992 Tigers I had planned to keep."

Sold to Malta

Mr Abela added a Plaxton 321-bodied Tiger from Silcock of Pembroke Dock and a Premiere-bodied Volvo. His Maltese colleagues also obtained similar Tigers and B10Ms.

Meanwhile, Alpha has topped up its planned new coach intake in the wake of the Maltese visit. Three new vehicles — two B10M and one Dennis Javelin — have been collected from Plaxton.

▼ Coach and bus

Under EvoBus umbrella

MERCEDES-BENZ and Kässbohrer are now under the umbrella of 100 per cent autonomous subsidiary, EvoBus.

The new arrangement has been put in place just 10 days after European Union approval for the Kässbohrer takeover by Mercedes-Benz and 48 hours after acquisition of the shares in Karl Kässbohrer Fahrzeugwerke GmbH (*Coach and Bus Week*, 25 February).

Bernd Gottschalk is chairman of a five-man EvoBus management team under managing director, Wolfgang Diez.

He described the new subsidiary as "the core of our entire European bus activities in terms of fiscal and company law." He confirmed that only the Mercedes-Benz and Setra trademarks will appear on the market.

Mr Gottschalk said: "A considerable improvement in the cost position is to be brought about above all by a co-ordinated manufacturing scheme incorporating our Mannheim, Ulm and New-Ulm plants."

Purchasing savings and component rationalisation are expected to follow and EvoBus is targeting profit within five years. Combined sales in 1994 amounted to 5,500 coaches and buses worth DM 3.2 million. EvoBus inherits a workforce of 5,200 in Germany and 6,000 in Turkey where a separate subsidiary is under EvoBus control.

Setra trademark retained

▼ Coach

Liquidation for op

A COACH operator's ambitious plans to break into the American travel market have come to nothing, with the company going into liquidation.

Scenic Quest of Lewisham, south east London, evolved from a coach company trading as Fred Scott and Daughters but now the new touring venture has collapsed owing £125,000.

It is not the first time the operation has been hit. In 1993 the company Fred Scott was sold. It then failed and was bought back by Mr Scott, who in 1994 reversed his business into that of a coach operator. The collapse of Scenic Quest has been blamed on two factors — the inability to collect VAT in Europe and the failure in January of a firm which was going to be the American arm of the joint venture.

A creditors' meeting was held in London on Wednesday, 22 February, when concern was expressed at the lack of any accounts for Scenic Quest. Indeed, some creditors went so far as to express alarm that one Scenic Quest employee seemed to be unaware of the need to even supply accounts.

Fred Scott had floated his plans for American business last Summer and had high hopes for this year. But these were dashed in early January when the American company went bust and Scenic Quest was left stranded.

The London firm of David Rowe has been appointed to deal with Scenic Quest's liquidation and it is believed the company is hopeful of selling off some stock. However, the man directly involved, Mr D Zackheim, said he was not prepared to discuss the matter.

CBW

▼ Coach and Bus

Spot checks on pollution

A NEW crackdown on vehicle pollution which will include spot checks and automatic prosecution has been set in motion by the Government.

Although light goods vans and taxis are the worst offenders, coaches and buses will also be checked in kerbside tests which are already being carried out in 23 towns and cities during the three-month campaign.

Drivers will be given no advanced notice and those who neglect vehicle maintenance will face automatic prosecution.

Transport Secretary Brian Mawhinney launched the campaign to cut the emission of pollutants blamed for a sharp increase in chest complaints such as asthma.

"Modern vehicles are easy to maintain. There is no excuse for the choking fumes we see belching out," said Mr Mawhinney.

Other initiatives in the crackdown will include tougher MOT test standards for engines from 1 September, and a study to check on the feasibility of MoT or roadside tests checking worn-out engines which burn too much oil and cause blue smoke emissions.

The Labour Party transport spokesman, Michael Meacher, welcomed the rule-tightening but accused the Government of itself being guilty of increasing pollution by deregulating buses outside London.

This, he claimed, had led to companies running competing buses half empty on a number of routes.

▼ Coach

York parking

COACH operators visiting York should be aware that the St John's coach and lorry park in Clarence Street is closed for repairs for three days from Monday. The nearest alternative is in Kent Street.

▼ Coach and Bus

A year after flotation GAG is looking good

Profit after tax at £2.083m is more than double the comparable period

by Richard Simpson

INTERIM six-monthly results from the Go-Ahead Group Plc show continued growth and improved performance since the company's flotation on the stock market less than a year ago.

Pre-tax profits at £3.179 million have more than doubled over the same comparable period (£1.423 million up to 1 January 1994) and have also exceeded the full year up to 2 July 1994 (£2.865 million).

GAG has set aside £534,000 for dividends, giving an interim payment of 1.6p per share.

Earnings per share have increased substantially from 4.19p to 6.24p.

Profit after tax at £2.083 million is more than double the £923,000 for the comparable period, and exceeds last year's full total of £1.957 million.

Turnover is up from £25.943 million to £48.659 million, reflecting the acquisition of Oxford Buses and London Central which did not appear in the previous period. The operating profit of £3.76 million indicates a 7.7 per cent margin on turnover.

Chairman Michael Straker said the board was pursuing acquisition opportunities offering further significant margin growth.

"A devolved company structure will ensure that management actions are implemented to suit local market conditions."

■ Now you can compare the performance of the Stock Exchange listed bus groups. The new fortnightly newsletter *Transit* runs a Stockwatch service showing the fluctuations in the shares price of the major groups together with commentary from a top City analyst. Your first FREE issue of *Transit* is presented with this copy of *Coach and Bus Week*.

Pre-tax profits of £3.179 million have more than doubled

"I'M SURE WE CAN KEEP OUR RUNNING COSTS BELOW THEIRS'."

▼ Light Rail

Big three bid for franchise

THREE major bus groups are involved in bidding for the franchise to design, build and run the £95 million Leeds Supertram.

Badgerline Group, Stagecoach Holdings and British Bus are three groups which have each joined one of seven consortia, and other bus companies are expected to join the remaining four bidding teams which will need operating experience to progress their bids.

West Yorkshire PTA hopes the Government will give approval to construct the 12-kilometre South Leeds Line before the end of the century. A final short-list of three or four consortia will have been selected by early May to submit detailed tenders, and the results should be known by early Autumn.

■ For further deatils see this week's issue of ***Transit***, the new fortnightly newsletter for bus company and light rail managers. ***Transit*** is a new ***Coach and Bus Week*** publication.

In brief

Licence cut

CARTERTON Coaches of Carterton, Oxfordshire has had its licence curtailed to expire on 31 December, 16 months early, and been warned about keeping its vehicles in fit and serviceable condition. It was called to public inquiry after a complaint about vehicle condition led to six vehicles being inspected with four receiving immediate prohibitions and two delayed prohibitions.

Prohibition

HUTTON Coach Hire of Weston-super-Mare has been granted a licence for a fourth vehicle but its licence has been curtailed by 12 months to expire this September after a Department of Transport examiner checked its fleet and issued an immediate and a delayed prohibition.

Dereg pledge

LABOUR has renewed its pledge to reverse bus deregulation (*Coach and Bus Week*, 21 January). Shadow Transport Secretary Michael Meacher has put forward a series of proposals to bring bus routes back under some form of public control, arguing that bus use had dropped by 30 per cent in some areas since dereg.

Summer help

PLYMOUTH Development Corporation is considering launching a waterbus service linking waterfront attractions including the Hoe, Barbican and Drake's Island. The aim is to ease Summer traffic congestion.

Passengers up

MERSEYTRAVEL'S high quality SMART services, which use low-floor buses and high-quality bus shelters and passenger information provision, experienced a steady rise in passengers last year from 26,000 in March to 55,000 in December. A major evaluation found that 97 per cent of passengers would use buses more if the SMART pattern was followed on future services

▼ Coach

School buys Sharrocks

BSS Coaches, run by Bolton School, has expanded and moved into mainstream coach hire

by Mike Morgan

BOLTON School, an independent educational establishment, has taken a major step into commercial coach operation with the takeover of long-established three-vehicle Westhoughton operator, Sharrocks.

Trading as BSS Coaches, Bolton School has increased fleet size to nine full-size coaches (51 to 57 seaters) along with three Mercedes-Benz midi-size coaches (19 and 33 seaters). The company employs former Evag Canon man Ken Stockton as transport manager.

In addition it has an administrator and 10 drivers, including two from Sharrocks, under the wing of estate bursar, John Greenhalgh. In the business for over 50 years, Sharrocks built its reputation as a family-run company providing quality coach services in private hire and contract work throughout Greater Manchester and across Lancashire.

The takeover coincides with the retirement of Sharrocks' owner Mrs Kay Hill, who has headed the company since the early 1980s. The existing Sharrocks operation has now transferred to BSS Coaches at Bolton School on Chorley New Road.

BSS Coaches has itself been providing private hire and contracts services since early 1993 but had operated services for some 30 years before that on a non-commercial basis.

John Greenhalgh (left) and Ken Stackton of Bolton School welcome Kay Hill

Acquisition of Sharrocks has come about as a direct result of an increase in business since 1993 and BSS says it presents the opportunity to offer existing and future customers a higher class of service for which Sharrocks has been noted.

Robin Senior, clerk to the treasurer and a director of Bolton School Services and BSS Coaches, said: "We are delighted to have acquired Sharrocks. The new operation will reduce the need for sub-contracting enabling us to expand our business. At the same time the reputation of Sharrocks will raise the profile of BSS Coaches in a market where there is an ever-growing demand for our services."

▼ Coach and Bus

Operators skid on day out

SURPRISED visitors to GM Buses (South) training school last week included representatives from Roadlease/National Expressliners and Plaxton.

Stuart Smith and Bob Walmsley joined a party of operators, including Manchester-based Bluebird and Maynes. It was a night out with a differnce on the Hyde Road skid pan.

They were taking a break from a *Coach and Bus Week* road test with a Plaxton/Volvo Expressliner. But their trip on the training school's last Leyland PD2 was a ride to remember.

Mr Walmsley took the wheel of the ageing decker and took great delight in throwing it sideways on the skid pan. However, Mr Smith, who confessed to not having driven a bus before, needed a little more coaxing. But after gentle persuasion quickly followed in the same tyre tracks.

● Turn to pages 30-32 for the Expressliner road test.

A ride to remember

▼ Coach

Anger at comment

WEST Midlands operator Alan Phillips is angered by editorial comment in his local Wolverhampton paper.

The *Express and Star* embraced the Government's coach outside lane ban with open arms saying: "Who can argue with Government plans to ban coaches from the outside lane on three-lane motorways?

"One of the most terrifying sights for any driver is a fully-laden coach thrashing down the fast lane in rain or sleet at 80mph-plus.

"If anything goes wrong the coach becomes an unstoppable battering ram, slicing through barriers like butter and crushing anything in its path.

"Lorries are already restricted to slower lanes. What is good enough for them is good enough for coaches.

"It may put a few extra minutes on journey times but so what? Better 20 minutes late in this life than 20 years early in the next."

Mr Phillips, a partner in Phillips Tours of Bewdley, asked three pertinent questions:

- Are coach operators providing vehicles for *Star* Readers Club Holidays in full agreement with the comments?
- If not, will other operators be asked to carry out the work?
- If the *Express and Star* has evidence of coaches breaking the speed limit why has it not been used to bring successful prosecutions?

CBW

▼ Coach

End of the road

A SOUTH West Scotland coach firm has ceased to operate — only mouths after defeating a bid to revoke its licence.

Bryce L Findlay of Glasgow chartered accountant Hughes Walker associates has been appointed receiver at John Nelson Coaches (JNC), based at Thornhill near Dumfries. The company's six-strong workforce has already left.

JNC faced a public inquiry in June last year after withdrawing at short notice from several runs. The traffic commission in Edinburgh subsequently sought to revoke the firm's O-licence on grounds of its financial standing but the decision was overturned on appeal to a transport tribunal in October.

John Nelson said: "After winning the tribunal, we had nothing left."

The company lost important school contracts, so concentrated on private hire and additional tour activities but, despite re-tendering successfully for four school contracts, was hit by poor business prospects.

▼ Bus

Council told of Fife Scottish 'monopoly'

'Stagecoach subsidiary cleans up on non-schools work'

by Ian Martin

FIFE Scottish now enjoys "a virtual monopoly" of non-schools commercial service provision in Fife, according to the region's director of engineering John Rowson.

In a report to Fife Regional Council's public transport sub committee, Mr Rowson points to the withdrawal of Black's Coaches service in Cowdenbeath, Lochgelly and Ballingry during 1993, adding that competition on commercial services between Fife Scottish and Moffat & Williamson "virtually ended" in July last year when the latter "withdrew almost completely from commercial operation" to concentrate on its coach activities.

The following month, he notes, Fife Scottish "rationalised service provision in Glenrothes, Leven, St Andrews and Tayport, these being the areas where competition had been most intense. The bus network has remained very stable for the latter part of 1994 and into early 1995."

Fife Scottish: 'Enjoys virtual monopoly'

● Fife Regional Council is proposing to introduce lighting to the new and existing bus shelters — claiming it will be the first regional authority in Scotland so to do.

The council's director of engineering John Rowson said the move reflected the importance of creating safer environments, particularly with regard to public transport.

He adds, however, that the additional cost imposed by lighting will mean a reduction in the number of shelters built from around 20 to 14 or 15 a year.

▼ Coach and bus

New Buchanan station 'one of the best'

GLASGOW'S £5 million refurbishment of Buchanan bus station was inaugurated by Strathclyde councillor, Charles Gordon, who said it now "ranks with the best in Europe."

The station now includes greatly improved passenger waiting facilities, better service information, a concourse-level restaurant and high-quality signing. A lounge for tour drivers is currently nearing completion.

The 57-stance bus station, the largest in Scotland and one of the largest in the UK, was first opened in 1977 by the Scottish Transport Group, but subsequent lack of investment led to it becoming, as Councillor Gordon described it, "a decaying down-at-heel facility".

It was, he said, a demonstration of what the public sector could do. "The private sector, frankly, had failed to develop the facility," he said. The bus station was latterly managed by Scottish Citylink, and several operators withdrew services at the time, blaming high departure charges.

With daily bus movements now up from 600 to 1,400 since Strathclyde PTE took the station over, and daily passenger movements up from 13,000 to 30,000, Buchanan is now one of the busiest stations in the UK.

Councillor Gordon revealed that nearly 70 per cent of public transport users in the Glasgow area used buses, and confirmed the PTE's belief that facilities such as Buchanan helped destroy the image of public transport as second-rate.

Buchanan bus station

The main heated concourse has been totally rebuilt in light materials with high levels of lighting. A new five metre extension from the concourse has created a new express service departure lounge area, with extensive seating for coach passengers. All 47 local service stances have received glass screening for weather protection.

Electronic destination information is provided in the main concourse, supplemented by clear timetable information at each stance. Closed-circuit cameras, roving security staff and high levels of lighting are provided to ensure safety and security for passengers. Latterly Buchanan had been regarded by many passengers as a dangerous place to visit, particularly at night.

The centrepiece of the refurbished concourse is a specially commissioned bronze statue of two lovers embracing.

CBW

In brief

Clinched it

THIS week's winner in the competition for the most appropriate surname is connected with the £5 million refurbishment of Glasgow's Buchanan Street bus station. The new-look facility features a bronze depicting a couple holding each other in an embrace — the work of sculptor John Clinch.

Now in reach

AN Edinburgh tourist attraction is now within reach of bus travellers after the launch of a new service by Wilson's Coaches. The firm, with bases in Carnwath and Larkhall, is operating hourly between parts of south-east Edinburgh and the highly popular Cameron Toll shopping centre. Along the route is Craigmillar Castle, a largely uncelebrated attraction which offers a spectacular view of Arthur's Seat.

All change

SMITH & Son of Coupar Angus has taken over the operation of two Tayside bus routes from Glenisla Coaches. The latter has ceased to run local services, it is understood. Both services operate from Blairgowrie: One covers Kirkmichael and Tarvie, while the other serves Dykends and Folda.

P&R free

GRAMPIAN Transport is to offer free travel on the King Street park-and-ride scheme in Aberdeen, as part of a bid to attract new passengers. In exchange for employers spreading the word about the scheme, employees will be allowed a week's commuting free of charge. There is currently no firm starting date for the scheme.

Vandalised

VANDALS have struck at Rogers Coaches of Peterhead for the second time in six months. In the latest attack, four coaches received £2,000 damage. Last September vandals caused damage in excess of £20,000.

▼ Coach and bus

CPT guide published

THE Confederation of Passenger Transport has released its 1995 guide to the passenger transport industry, aimed at the media and its members.

The leaflet uses charts and statistics to demonstrate the importance of the industry in Britain... figures which CPT members have used in the past when confronted by media interest.

For example, of 3,814 road fatalities, 1,760 of which were car occupants, only 35 drivers and passengers died on coaches and buses. In terms of kilometres of journey per passenger, that makes them four times safer.

Particulate emissions — sometimes blamed for a tenfold increase in asthma — are mainly a problem of the freight industry. In all, 81 per cent of particulates come from trucks and only 11 per cent from PCVs.

● Copies of the CPT's Facts '95 leaflet are available direct from the CPT on 0171 831 7546.

▼ Bus

Bournemouth bus war recedes as deal is done

by Mike Morgan

PROSPECTS of another bus war in Bournemouth this Summer have receded after a deal between municipal Yellow Buses, the Bournemouth Transport Museum and Green Buses Ltd.

Green Buses was granted an O-licence last December only after the Western traffic commissioner was satisfied it was not "the phoenix of Bournemouth Heritage Transport" (*Coach and Bus Week*, 7 January).

BHT ran in competition against the municipal for 15 months before collapsing with debts of £350,000 last August.

In a deal which provides the Transport Museum with support without the need for it to get involved in conventional bus operations in the town, a core collection of 23 restored Bournemouth trams, trolley-buses and motorbuses will go on display at Yellow Buses' Mallard Road depot this Summer.

Green Buses will be renamed Vintage Yellow Buses Ltd, and will have former BHT/Routemaster managing director Keith Baynton in charge with Yellow Buses md Ted Reid on the board.

It will exploit opportunities for vintage bus operations and other activities outside the scope of Yellow Buses.

The Bournemouth Corporation livery of primrose yellow and maroon will be restored to the Vintage Yellows fleet, a number of which will be used on Yellow Buses seafront and tourist services.

The transport Museum Collection, which was under the wing of Bournemouth Museum, is now nearing the end of a five-year grant-aid plan from the council and is required to become financially self-supporting.

The charitable trust which is responsible for the museum had a minority interest in BHT/Routemaster and supplied vehicles on hire through its trading subsidiary.

Now any future trading of this nature will not clash with the interest of council-owned Yellow Buses.

Yellow Buses will host museum display

▼ Coach and bus

Black Prince expands operations in Leeds

LEEDS independent Black Prince of Morley expanded its operations last week with the acquisition of additional midibuses and the takeover of a number of tendered services in the Leeds area from incumbent Yorkshire Rider.

Further second-hand single deckers are being purchased and the company expects its first four new buses to be delivered this month.

Country services to Otley via Harewood have been taken over on an all-day basis and tendered sections within Leeds have had commercial sections added to them to create new links. Routes in West Leeds have been extended commercially to the Owlcotes shopping centre as a commercial experiment.

The midibus route from Leeds to Farnley and Tyersal, which requires narrow vehicles, has been taken over on weekdays and evenings and two Optare MetroRiders have been purchased for the service from Heatons of Leigh.

Proprietor Brian Crowther said one or two journeys had been lost in the tendering process but the overall situation was one of net gains.

"Wherever we open up a new route, our staff are welcomed and we soon build up a loyal following," he said. CBW

Narrow MetroRiders for Farnley and Tyersal route

▼ Coach and bus

Golden days end

SOUTH Wales bus operator Golden Coaches has closed and Cardiff Buses has taken over its routes.

The six-bus company, which spotted a niche on badly-served routes as National Welsh sank, initially ran buses between Llantwit Major and Cardiff, eventually incorporating Barry into subsidised, commercial and school-bus operations.

Last week, Golden Coaches' vehicles were replaced with Cardiff Buses, and the sale of its vehicles announced at its rural depot.

The company was not available for comment as *Coach and Bus Week* went to press.

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First Registered 07.01.92, 7 speed manual GR801 comfort shift gearbox, ABS, road speed governor, variable top speed limiter, exhaust brake, kneel facility, ferry lift, autolube, electric retarder. Webasto heating, inswinging entrance door, central continental door, centre toilet, half rear emergency, 3 roof vents, forced air ventilation, aircraft lockers, crew compartment, grey moquette, 49 reclining seats, centre gangway carpet, double glazed, side curtains, rear curtains, side blinds, aluminium wheels, Blaupunkt radio/pa systems.

VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200

(**REBODIED 1992**) First registered 1988, 273 BHP engine, ZF 6 speed S690 manual gearbox, 53 reclining seats, Ishringhausen driver seat, 1/2 rear emergency exit, forced air ventilation, 3 roof vents, double glazed, side blinds rear curtains, radiomobile radio/PA/ cassette, centre gangway carpet, autolube, telma retarder, road speed governor, variable top speed limiter, exhaust brakes, ferry lift, brown/orange moquette, exterior blue.

LEYLAND TIGER L10 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200

First Registered 1989, Cummins L10 290 engine, ZF 6 speed manual gearbox, Telma retarder, ferry lift, ABS autolube, variable top speed limiter, inswinging front entrance door, half rear emergency door, ishringhausen drivers seat, 53 reclining seats, blue moquette, 3 roof vents, forced air ventilation, double glazed, side blinds, rear curtains, radiomobile radio/pa system. **Choice of 10. (4 sold)**

VOLVO B10MT MKIII PLAXTON 4000

First Registered 1989, 65/67 armchair reclining seats, TV/video stero, toilet, double glazing, sun blinds, curtains, carpets, drinks, fridge, drivers bunk, crew seat, new MoT.

VOLVO B10M BERKHOF ESPRIT

First Registered 1984, 53 recliners plus courier, curtains, centre carpet, radio/pa/cassette. **Choice of 2.**

BEDFORD YNT PLAXTON SUPREME V

First Registered 1982, 40 seats, courier seat, rear toilet, curtains, servery, wheel discs, TV/video, MoT 11.01.96.

VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200

First Registered 1991, 273 BHP engine, ZFHP500 auto gearbox, 53 reclining seats, Ishringhausen driver seat, rear curtains, inswing front entrance door, rear door emergency exit, double glazed, side blinds, forced air ventilation, 3 roof vents, radiomobile radio/PA system, autolube, ABS braking system, ferry lift, roadspeed governor variable top speed limiter, internal retarder, brown/orange moquette, exterior blue, choice of 10.

MAN (16290) JONCKHEERE DEAVILLE

First registered 1989, 6 speed ZF gearbox, 49 reclining seats, air conditioning, double glazing, O/S/R floor mounted toilet, Telma, curtains, radio/PA/cassette, painted all white, new MoT, choice of 2.

VAN HOOL 7815 INTEGRAL

First Registered 1991, Cumins L10 290 BHP engine, ZF HP600 automatic gearbox with integral retarder, Sutrak air conditioning, autolube, variable top speed limiter, road speed governor, kneel facility, ferry lift. Webasto heating, brown moquette, 53 reclining seats plus courier, ishringhausen drivers seat, plug door, half rear emergency door, 2 roof vents, double glazed, side blinds, rear curtains, radiomobile radio/pa system. **Choice of 5**

BEDFORD YNV PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200

First registered 1985, 53 'E Type' seats air suspension, curtains, internal grey/maroon, exterior all white, MoT June 95.

NEOPLAN SKYLINER

First Registered 1990, Mercedes V10, 77 seats plus courier, toilet, TV/video system, Telma, servery, water boilers, drinks, curtains.

DAF MB200 DUPLE CARIBEAN II

First Registered 1985, 49 reclining seats, TV/video, radio / pa / stereo, water boiler, double glazing, drivers bunk, MoT 18.10.95

DAF MB2300 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500

First Registered 1984, 49 recliners, 6 speed splitter gearbox, double glazed, continental door, curtains, side lockers, power door, rear toilet, drinks, TV/video, MoT 18.10.95

VOLVO B10M MK III VAN HOOL ALIZEE

First Registered 1990, ZF 6 speed S690 manual gearbox, Telma retarder, autolube, ferry lift, road speed governor, variable top speed limiter, exhaust brake, Webasto heating, front plug entrance door, centre continental door, half rear emergency door, centre toilet/servery, crew compartment, 3 roof vents, forced air ventilation, ishringhausen drivers seat, 49 reclining seats plus courier, brown moquette, double glazed, side blinds, rear curtains, radiomobile radio/pa system. **Choice of 6 (2 sold)**

VOLVO B10M MK III VAN HOOL ALIZEE

First Registered 1987, 51 reclining seats plus courier, centre sunken toilet, continetal door, TV/video, radio/pa cassette, coffee machine, fridge, brown/orange chevron moquette, New MoT.

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▼ Bus

First low-floor midi for UK has arrived

Neoplan agent SJ Carlton collects N4009

by Mike Morgan

THE UK's first low-floor midibus arrived last week. Neoplan's UK agent, SJ Carlton, collected the first of three N4009 20-seaters with ramp and space for two wheelchairs.

Over 2,000 N-series low-floor buses from eight-metre N4008s to 18-metre articulated N4021s have been built by the German manufacturer and 12 N4016 11.7-metre vehicles went into service with MTL in Liverpool at the end of 1993.

These pioneer vehicles — the first low-floor buses to go into service in Britain — are to be followed by the three 8.59-metre N4009s.

They go to the same operator and are expected to be in service ahead of the launch of British-built alternatives by Volvo and Dennis with either Wrights or Plaxton bodywork (*Coach and Bus Week*, 25 February).

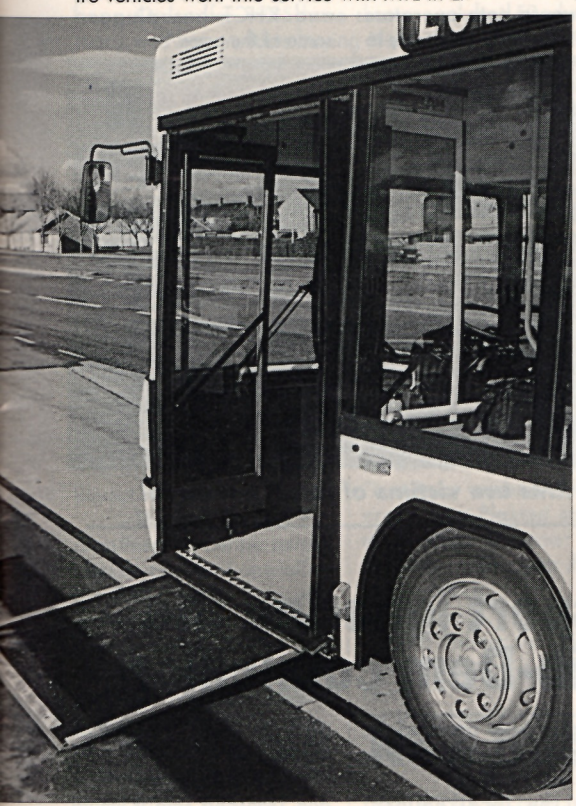
The Neoplan midi is a scaled-down full-size bus. It is 2.5 metres wide and has 1,350mm door aperture and Bode 3001 ramp. Gross vehicle weight is 8,040kg.

Interior layout allows for 13 seats on the rear raised section over the transmission. The step-less low-floor section forward of the rear axle has four tip-up and three fixed seats with space for two wheelchairs — one either side of a large standee area for 25 passengers.

It is powered by a four-cylinder MAN engine driving through the first British application of a four-speed Voith Midi-Mat automatic gearbox.

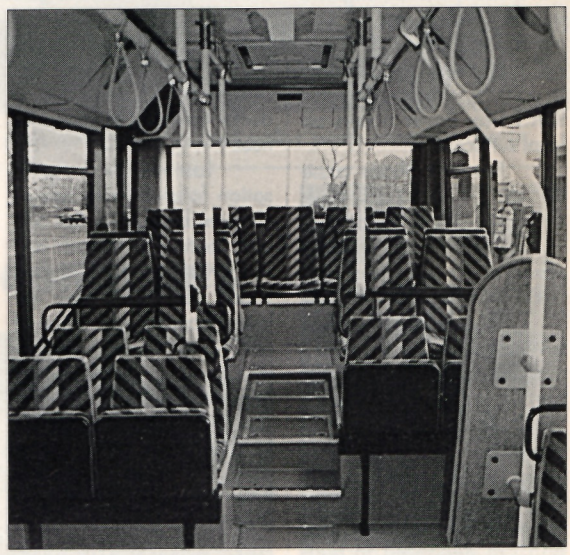
On a brief *Coach and Bus Week* test drive the N4009 demonstrated superb ride qualities from the Neoplan independent front suspension despite the 4,250mm wheelbase. Power from the 155bhp engine was delivered progressively and gear changes smooth despite high engine revs on steep hills. Top speed was 50mph.

Front suspension kneel and automatic ramp combine to give excellent wheelchair access. Operation is quick when pulling up at bus stops, but the doors cannot be closed until the ramp is fully retracted.



Excellent wheelchair access

Neoplan's N4009 20-seater...



...has 13 seats on rear raised section

Neoplan N4009 Specification

Engine: Four cylinder 4.58 litre MAN 0824LOH
Output: 155bhp
Gearbox: Four-speed Voith Midi-Mat BR
Length: 8.59 metres
Width: 2.5 metres
Front overhang: 2.4 metres
Wheelbase: 4.25 metres
Rear overhang: 2.3 metres
Tyres: 265/70R 19.5
GVW: 8,040kg

▼ Coach and bus

New Merc van set for launch

MERCEDES-BENZ is poised to launch the replacement for its T1 van — the vehicle which has come to dominate the British minibus market.

The Sprinter is a new 2.6 to 4.6-tonne vehicle which matches an advanced technical specification with proven design features.

Three engine options will be offered including an all-new 121 bhp five-cylinder turbodiesel, the first Mercedes engine to have direct fuel injection.

The proven four-cylinder 78 bhp diesel continues, with a 141 bhp fuel injection petrol engine available for those who prefer spark ignition. Floating calliper disc brakes all round with ABS are standard. Early factory options include an eight-seat crew bus, but chassis cab versions with wheelbases of up to 4,025mm will be available for specialist bodybuilders.

The design's reduced production times and costs mean that UK prices will be up to four per cent lower than the present range. CBW

Sprinter replacing T1 minibus base

SELECTION OF QUALITY PREOWNED VEHICLES

▼ Bus

Schoolboy is a winner

TWELVE-year-old Hull school boy Shane Baker collected a £100 cheque from Cleveland Transit md Malcolm Howitt after winning KHCT's first School's Out Treasure Hunt, which took place last Autumn.

The scheme was thought up by KHCT driver Stuart Spandler as a novel method of keeping youngsters occupied during the school holidays and participants were provided with a series of mystery landmarks to identify while using the KHCT Day Rover tickets on local services.

Bus-mad Shane came out top of over 100 high quality entries in the difficult competition, which was aimed at 10 to 14 year olds with free entry.

"The competition has been a major success and I am sure we will continue to run similar events in the future," Mr Howitt said. "It is a pleasure to see so many youngsters using public transport to get more involved in their surroundings, and I'm delighted to welcome Shane as our first such winner."

▼ Bus

Hull services restructured for third time by rival ops

Over half of EYMS Routemaster fleet lost

by Andrew Jarosz

SERVICES in Hull underwent their third restructuring upheaval last week — as competing operators East Yorkshire and Stagecoach-owned KHCT exchanged services and co-ordinated frequencies for the third time, with a consequent loss of over half of EYMS's conductor-operated Routemaster fleet.

Last month's reorganisation followed two sets of changes brought in last July and September (*Coach and Bus Week*, 11 June) and is widely believed to have followed from the acquisition of KHCT and its parent company Cleveland Transit by the Stagecoach Group.

The current changes see the departure of East Yorkshire from services to Bransholme, Bilton Grange and services to Orchard Park. Although some routes remain jointly co-ordinated, the approximate share of city traffic is now nearer 50/50 between the two operators as opposed to the previous 70/30.

KHCT has made a net increase of 12 peak-hour vehicles with EYMS taking out 12 buses of which 11 were crew operated. This shrank the active EYMS Routemaster fleet to about seven buses on the Longfield Asda route, which was first converted in 1988. Some redundancies of short-service conductors were envisaged.

KHCT is taking immediate loan of 12 Volvo B10Ms from the Stagecoach vehicle pool before the arrival of 12 new Volvo single deckers and three Olympians bodied by Northern Counties later this year.

"We pared Hull services to the bone earlier last year," said Stephen Warnock-Smith of Cleveland Transit. "And we needed to add more buses into the system."

EYMS joint managing director Peter Shipp said the Routemasters were unable to maintain even frequencies with the buses of KHCT on joint routes because they were catching up the one-person operated buses.

"We needed a situation where both operators were sufficiently profitable to continue operations and this helps KHCT to do that," he said.

Stressing that the EYMS share of operations was still greater than in 1992, Mr Shipp said certain services weren't producing a good return.

"We've withdrawn those services that weren't giving us what we needed and KHCT has plugged some of the gaps."

Hull RMs are victims of latest upheaval

▼ Bus

Liverpool buses named in test of customer likes

NEW buses in Liverpool are being individually named to find whether passengers build up an association with such vehicles.

Although a common practice with mainline railway engines and aircraft, the naming of buses is still not that common, although Viscount has done so in Peterborough and Manchester Metrolink tramcars are carrying sponsored advertising and nameplates.

Staff at Radio Merseyside put forward the idea to MTL Merseybus and have sponsored the name on one of the new Wright-bodied Volvo single deckers dedicated to the Shiel Road circular service.

A donation was made to a children's charity equivalent to the cost of the specially-manufactured nameplates.

Broadcaster and columnist Linda McDermott launched the first vehicle on the service, which she had used every day when at school and which passes the BBC Merseyside studios.

"Now we are able to start improving our fleet by investing in new vehicles, we are keen too ensure that the equipment is well looked after and maintained to the highest standards," Merseybus operations manager Terry Nolan said.

▼ Bus

London Transport ignoring the public says Lib-Dem councillor

LONDON bus controllers are being accused of ignoring public demand for a route linking the suburbs with the centre of the capital.

London Transport, which chooses operators and decides routes, has come under fire from Liberal Democrat Councillor Jonathan Davies.

Finchley in North London lost the RM-operated 13 route when BTS took over after winning a tender.

A major row broke out in the locality when it was announced BTS would operate the route between Aldwych in central London to Golders Green, north-west London.

London Buses, which had previously operated the route, had run it further north into Finchley.

The local council, Labour-controlled Barnet, had received so many complaints about the axeing of the northern end of the route that it took the matter up with London Transport.

London Transport said it had no intention of reinstating the route between Golders Green and Finchley.

"London Transport has ignored widespread demands for the reinstatement. North Finchley residents are now deprived for a direct route to central London but, as London Transport is not accountable to anyone, I don't know where we can go from here," Councillor Davies said.

In a statement, London Transport said it would not be doing a U-turn and that meant the route 13 would not return to Finchley

A spokesman said: "We have limited resources and they must be used to benefit the maximum number of people. We feel that the level of service now is adequate to meet the demand.

Determined to get the route reinstated to Finchley, several councillors from all parties were talking this week of putting more pressure on London Transport to get the decision revoked.

▼ ADVERTISEMENT

Plaxton plans coach growth

COACH output at Plaxton is set to increase in 1995, as the company wins new business in a growing market. Last year Plaxton produced 350 coaches — and was UK market leader. This year output will rise to 450.

"We see both our sales and our market share rising this year," says Kevin Wood, Plaxton's coach sales manager. "We have won a lot of repeat business from operators who bought Premieres and Excaliburs in 1994, and we're winning over a very healthy number of new customers too."

Orders for 1995 have shown many well-known fleets buying Plaxton. Among orders so far announced have been 35 for Wallace Arnold, 24 for Bebbs, 23 for Excelsior, eight for Go-Whittle and seven for Skills.

"While it's the fleet orders which make the headlines," Kevin Wood continued, "we are finding that a lot of our growth is coming from smaller businesses buying one or two coaches.

This is broadening our customer base, which is a central part of our strategy for growth."

Last year Plaxton was clear coach market leader with a share of almost 50 per cent — up from 32 per cent in 1993.

Plaxton: Achieving increased sales with smaller fleets

▼ Coach and Bus

First orders

LONDON General is one of the first of the privatised London Buses subsidiaries to place an order for new vehicles. It is taking 16 Dennis Darts with Plaxton Pointer bodies, to be delivered in May. London General was privatised last Autumn in a management/employee buyout.

The first Plaxton Expressliners on Dennis Javelin chassis are now operating for South Wales Transport on National Express services linking South Wales and London. Up till now the Expressliner had been offered only on Volvo's B10M chassis. There are over 250 Expressliners in operation countrywide.

Yorkshire Rider has become Britain's biggest Plaxton Verde user, with the delivery of 48 on Dennis Lance chassis. And the Gateshead-based Go-Ahead Group has joined the growing list of Verde customers, with an order for 30 on the Volvo Bus Chassis.

Plaxton produced a record 1,150 vehicles in 1994, according to figures released by the company last week. It says that, with healthy demand across its product range, this figure will be higher still in 1995 as capacity is increased.

▼ Bus

Midi market expansion continues

THE midibus market — led by the Dennis Dart and Volvo B6 — is set to continue its steady growth in 1995.

Plaxton, whose Pointer had a 40 per cent share of the midibus sector in 1994, is increasing production by 25 per cent to cater for a growing number of orders and inquiries. "Last year we built 400 Pointers," says Plaxton sales and marketing Director David Quainton. "This year the figure will be 500."

Plaxton delivered its 1000th Pointer in 1994. The 2000th Pointer is not that far away.

Plaxton Verde on Dennis Lance for Busways

New bus coming from Plaxton

GROWING success in the bus market with both the Verde and the Pointer have prompted Plaxton to develop a new product to be launched later this year. It follows extensive market research by the company, working with an as yet unnamed chassis manufacturer.

"We've identified a growth area which our existing products do not adequately cater for," confirmed Plaxton sales and marketing director David Quainton, "and this exciting new project is aimed fairly and squarely at this key business opportunity."

Mr Quainton said that the new model would complement the company's existing bus models, which are to continue largely unchanged. It is understood that the new model will be revealed at Coach and Bus 95 this Autumn.

Pointer production to rise by 25 per cent

▼ Bus

Anston Beaver production increased

PRODUCTION at Plaxton's small-bus division in Anston is being stepped up to seven bodies a week. Anston builds the market-leading Beaver, production of which was transferred from Plaxton's Scarborough plant last year to release space for increased numbers of full-size buses and coaches.

Announcing the increase in output, David Quainton, Plaxton's sales and marketing director, said: "The Beaver has been an outstanding success and is easily Britain's best-selling small bus. We are part way through a major order for the Badgerline Group, and have also just won a significant order from British Bus."

Alongside the fleet orders Anston builds small numbers of Beavers for stock, enabling Plaxton to meet demands from fleets seeking quick delivery. At present the Beaver is being built on Mercedes-Benz 709D and 811D chassis.

Contact: Plaxton Coach & Bus, Eastfield, Scarborough YO11 3BY. Tel: 01723 581500 or fax: 01723 581328.

▼ Licencing

Cardiff Bluebird granted licence

CARDIFF Bluebird, which has been operating in the Welsh capital in competition with Cardiff City Bus, has been granted a full five-year O-licence by South Wales traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh.

The company, at the rear of 307 Penarth Road, Cardiff, had applied for a national licence authorising the operation of five minibuses, 10 single deckers and 20 double deckers.

Mr Pugh was told at a Cardiff public inquiry that, if successful, the application would lead to the surrender of a licence held by Tellings Golden Miller, trading as Cardiff Bluebird.

The commissioner granted the licence after hearing financial evidence in private at the company's request.

▼ Court

Unlicensed operator fined £50

AN operator has been fined £50 by Barry Magistrates for the unauthorised use of a minibus. David Roger Hughes, of Llwynhendy Road, Llanelli, admitted using the vehicle without an O-licence. The court was told the minibus had been stopped in a check at the Cardiff (Wales) Airport.

▼ Maintenance

Shaw Hadwin has a cut over maintenan

Snags started after acquisition of Lonsdale C

by Michael Jewell

CONCERN over the condition of vehicles operated by the North Lancashire-based Shaw Hadwin companies has led to the vehicle authorisation on their licences being reduced from 59 to 47 at a Manchester disciplinary inquiry.

John Shaw & Son (Silverdale) Ltd, trading as Shaw Hadwin Lonsdale Tours, and Hadwins Tours Ltd, trading as Shaw Hadwin/Percival, of Stoneleigh, Silverdale, Carnforth, had been called before North Western traffic commissioner Martin Albu.

For the two companies, John Backhouse said there had been no real problems until they acquired the business of Lonsdale Coaches, at Heysham, from Lancaster City Transport.

Maintenance was carried out at two of their four depots, Silverdale and Dalton in Furness, the others being at Heysham and Ambleside.

DoT vehicle examiner Brian Hayhurst said he had carried out a maintenance investigation at Silverdale in October after a complaint from a passenger about vehicle condition.

He inspected 14 vehicles, issuing two immediate and three delayed prohibition notices, together with seven defect notices. Some of the defects should have been noticed by the drivers.

Some drivers reported defects while others did not. The vehicles were generally shoddy. The facilities at Silverdale were barely adequate for the large coaches operated and there appeared to be little or no management control over the maintenance arrangements.

Bodywork repairs in particular were carried out to a minimum standard. The frequency of inspection was irregular and there were gaps in the records. There was no record of one vehicle having been inspected between February and July 1994.

Over the past five years 14 immediate and 12 delayed prohibitions had been issued in spot checks in regard to Silverdale. As far as Dalton was concerned, there had been six immediate and seven delayed prohibitions in the same period, plus two variation notices.

He felt that Darren Shaw, who was in charge of the maintenance, was under pressure and struggling to control it. He thought he had been thrown in at the deep end to look after 60 vehicles, said Mr Hayhurst.

Of a sample of 119 vehicles sent in for annual test, 58 per cent passed first time, a further 28 per cent passed after rectification at the test station, and 14 per cent failed.

Mr Shaw agreed there were concerns about maintenance even before they had acquired Lonsdale

Robert Shaw said he and his wife were the two directors. The business had been operating from Silverdale since 1872. They became involved in Dalton in 1977 when they bought Hadwins Coaches from Barrow Corporation.

They acquired Browns Coaches at Ambleside in 1994. The six vehicles operated from Ambleside were maintained at Dalton.

When they acquired Lonsdale Coaches in August 1993 they found the vehicles they had acquired from Lancaster City required more maintenance than they had anticipated.

They had acquired a three-acre site in Carnforth. Planning permission had been applied for and they had been told there was unlikely to be any serious problem.

A five-bay workshop would be constructed with a test lane. The intention was to bring the Silverdale and Heysham operations under one roof.

They would also use Carnforth for any heavy maintenance work. He would like to think they would be in the new premises in June.

After the vehicle examiner's visit, they had introduced a drivers' daily nil-defect reporting system, with the drivers being given daily check lists.

They now had a chief engineer in charge at each depot and the wall charts showed the dates when inspections were due, rather than calculating the number of weeks that had elapsed since the date of the last inspection as in the past.

In reply to the commissioner, Mr Shaw agreed there were concerns about maintenance even before they had acquired Lonsdale Coaches. He said he was fairly happy they had done things right in 1993.

Mr Albu said that, even in 1993, there had been a couple of prohibitions marked as showing a significant maintenance failure, so there should have been some

Licence cut

alarm bells ringing.

Mr Shaw said he was fairly happy with their annual test record. During the Summer season they had a minimum of 20 vehicles a week spot checked.

The commissioner said the Traffic Area had received various letters of complaint. One last September complained about a coach breaking down.

The letter stated the driver got the passengers to bump start it and then continued the journey from Forton to Barrow without headlights.

Mr Shaw said he had asked the driver if the headlights were working and he had said they were. The problem had been the battery was not charging.

Mr Albu said another complaint, which concerned a doubled-decked coach swaying, had appeared in a local paper.

Mr Shaw said they did not usually use double-decker coaches on excursions. There was nothing wrong with the vehicle. It was a very windy day and that had caused a lot of swaying.

Mr Albu said a letter dated October complained about a windscreen wiper not

uthorisation
ce problems

aches from Lancaster City Transport, inquiry told

om 59 to 47

working and getting stuck on a journey from Barrow to Leeds on a rainy day. It was also said the door did not operate properly and the driver had telephoned the office seven times before an engineer eventually came out.

Darren Shaw said he had been on duty at Silverdale and had gone out as soon as the driver rang him. It might be the driver had been ringing Dalton when nobody was there.

Now they had appointed chief engineers, he was able to stand back from the routine inspections, but he did carry out random checks on one vehicle in 10.

He had previously worked probably 50 per cent of his time in the garage. He now spent very little time there and was more organised.

A lot of the rectification work done at the test station was a question of headlamp beam re-alignment. On their school contract work they operated over very narrow roads.

Consequently, they got a lot of minor damage to bodywork. The policy was to keep the bodywork up to a minimum standard, and then put each vehicle into the bodyshop once every 12 months.

Asked about a letter of complaint from Cheshire Police about a vehicle said to have been found with loose wheelnuts in a multi-agency check at Sandbach, Darren Shaw said he could not understand it.

The driver had not reported he had been checked and no prohibition notice had been issued. They had not had a wheelnut problem before.

Mr Albu suggested a 14 per cent failure rate at annual test showed a rather casual approach. If the fitters were first class, the vehicle should get through first time, he said.

Mr Backhouse said the annual test first-time pass rate was above the national average. While not a matter for complacency, the history generally showed Shaw Hadwin had been keen throughout to ensure its vehicles were properly maintained.

The problems at Heysham had taken time to overcome. With a fleet of this size, operated from different depots on a mix of work, there was bound to be occasions when something was found to have gone wrong.

The prohibition rate was a reasonable one and did not indicate maintenance had been neglected.

He suggested the letters of complaint related to faults that had arisen during journeys and did not reflect on the standard of maintenance.

Mr Albu said none of the prohibitions were desperately serious but he thought there were more than he would have expected from a reputable operator of that size.

He also thought 14 per cent was too high a failure rate at annual test. He hoped the arrival of the new premises in Carnforth would enable Shaw Hadwin to operate at a high standard.

In the meantime, he thought he needed to reduce the number of vehicles they were authorised to operate. When the new premises were ready he could have a re-think about the whole operation.

The commissioner deferred the implementation of his decision for 28 days while consideration is given to an appeal.

'Deckers not normally used'

▼ **Maintenance**

Carver warned to keep record clean by commissioner

COACH operator Brian Carver has been warned by North Western traffic commissioner Martin Albu that, from now on, he wants to see a clean record in relation to the maintenance of his vehicles.

Mr Carver, who trades as "A" Coaches Carver Coaches Cheshire, of 22 Rossmore Road West, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, holds an international licence for eight vehicles.

DoT vehicle examiner Geoffrey Chan told a Manchester public inquiry he had carried out a maintenance investigation in September 1994 after the issue of a prohibition notice in a spot check.

Delayed prohibition notices were issued to two vehicles.

There had been two spot checks in which prohibitions were issued and two spot checks which were satisfactory.

Inspections were split into two, inside and top, and underneath.

There were inspection records missing, some were not fully completed and the periods ranged from six weeks to seven months. There was a driver defect reporting system in operation but only a few defects had been entered. There were parking facilities but none for inspection at the operating centre.

'There were inspection records missing'

Mr Carver said he had been in the business since 1968 and currently had six vehicles. He was not a qualified mechanic but had done all the inspections and maintenance since 1968.

He believed he had a good record with Cheshire County Council and had been working with them since 1968. Safety inspections were contracted out at monthly intervals. The contractor did not always provide an inspection sheet.

Asked why, Mr Carver said he did not know why they did not always complete an inspection sheet. He was on his own and he had a lot of paperwork to deal with.

'Mr Carver said he was ashamed of his record'

Since Mr Chan's visit, the contractors had provided inspection sheets. He inspected the top of the vehicle and inside himself and used a sheet for those inspections.

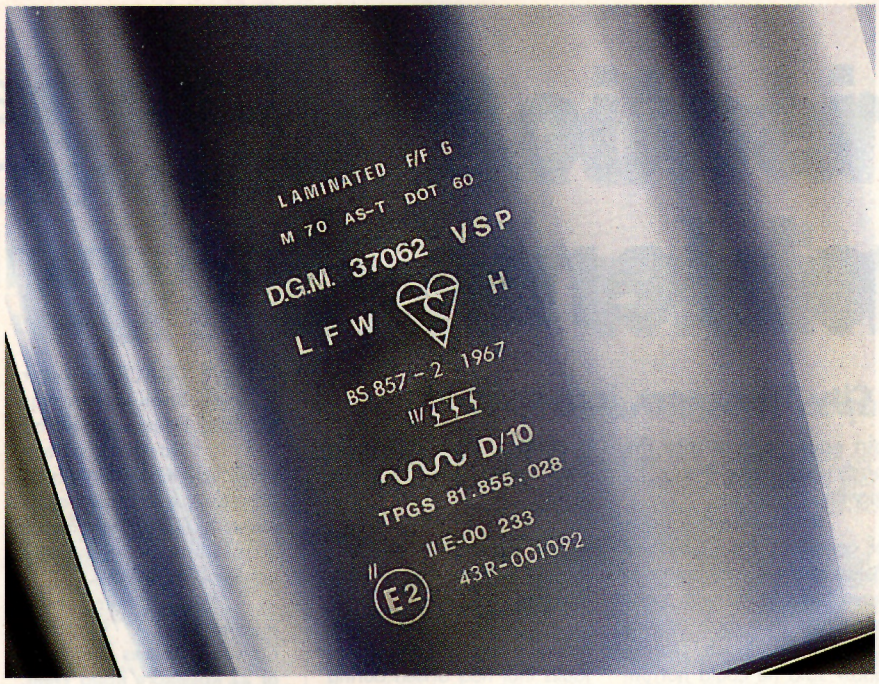
He was ashamed of his record, Mr Carver said. He did all the maintenance himself and he had never been pulled up at annual test. He had just let himself down with the paperwork.

Mr Albu said Mr Carver's licence expired in June 1996 unless, in the meantime, continuous licensing was brought in and then it could not expire. Between then and now there would be another maintenance investigation.

He took account of the fact Mr Carver had been in the business a long time and he previously had a good record. Things were not satisfactory in September 1994.

It was one of those cases where someone who had been in the business for a long time was inclined to carry on without observing all the regulations. The important thing was vehicles should be kept in a satisfactory state. CBW

THERE'S SAFETY IN NUMBERS.



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▼ Europe

Novotel offers special rate

COACH groups visiting Germany can take advantage of special rates for an overnight stop at the Novotel Hanover. Opened in May 1993, the Novotel offers bed and breakfast for DM 45 per person a night. This is based on two sharing a double room. Half-board supplement is DM15.

The hotel is close to the autobahn to Hamburg, Berlin and Dortmund. Book direct on 05 11 9 56 60 or call UK Novotel Central Reservations on 0181 748 3433.

■ The current exchange rate is approximately DM2.34 to the £.

▼ UK

(Not) in for a penny...

by William Golden

A COACH tour organiser is involved in a legal row with a woman who claims a trip to France was ruined when she was left stranded after answering a call of nature.

The passenger, Rita Godding, of Brighouse, W Yorks, said she was left standing in the rain when the coach driver, unaware she was not on board, carried on to Dover after picking up a group in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire.

The trip last December was organised by Leisure Travel, of Belton, Doncaster, W Yorks, and subcontracted to another coach company.

Mrs Godding had joined the double-decker coach at Huddersfield and claimed she was abandoned in Mansfield despite being accompanied off the coach by a travel courier.

She had to make her own way home by public transport and has instituted legal proceedings against Leisure Travel.

Mr Geoff Booker, for Leisure Travel, said: "Of course we regret the incident and wish it never happened, but I should point out that Mrs Godding left the coach at an unauthorised stop.

"She got off outside a Kodak factory in Mansfield to find a toilet - even though there was one on the vehicle.

"The driver was told by the group organiser that everyone was on the vehicle before he set off."

Mr Booker said that Mrs Godding's sister-in-law and two nieces were on the coach but it was two-and-a-half-hours before they notified the driver that she was not aboard.

"Obviously if he had been told at once, he would have turned round and picked her up," said Mr Booker.

"But by that time, the coach was almost at Dover and he had to look after the interests of the other 68 people on board."

He added that Mrs Godding had demanded a taxi to Dover but "that would have been more than the cost of the overnight trip."

Mr Booker said that the question of any compensation claimed by Mrs Godding was in the hands of his solicitors.

▼ UK

Royal Armouries moves

CALL the shots in Hampshire this Summer when the Royal Armouries' celebrated collection of arms and armour moves from the Tower of London to Fort Nelson in Fareham.

As a result, the fort will open on 1 April on a daily basis for the first time

The Tower of London was able to display barely 10 per cent of its collection. Now Fort Nelson and the new complex in Leeds - scheduled to open in 1996 - will enable the exhibits to be displayed on a national basis.

Among the items on display at Fort Nelson will be a medieval bombard gun from 1450 - on show for the first time - and one of only two surviving 'Commonwealth' cannon from the English Civil War.

Coming right up to date, the Iraqi supergun impounded before the Gulf War also will be on show.

Coach groups qualify for a special admission price of £1.80 a head and there is free parking opposite the museum. Fort Nelson is just off junction 11 of the M27 and is mile north of Fareham on the A27.

For more information, call 01329 233734 (fax 01329 822092).

▼ UK

Cathedral booking time reduced

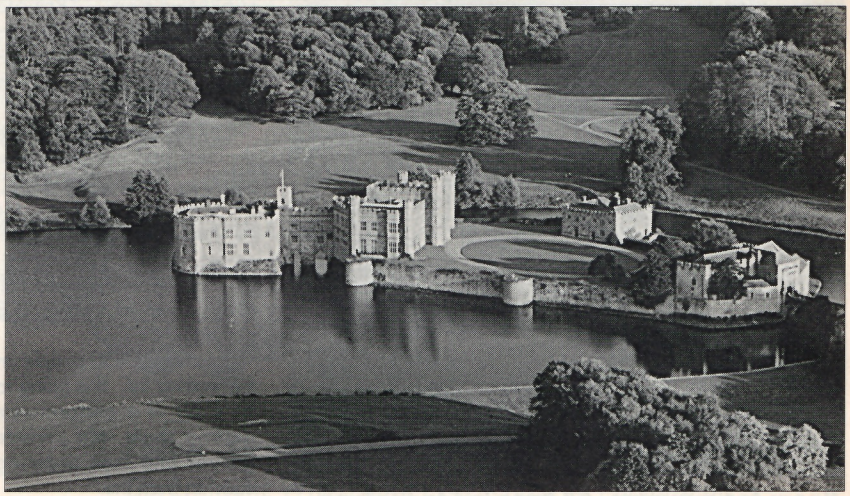
GROUPS organising visits to Durham Cathedral do not have to plan so far in advance this year. The booking time has been reduced from one month to one week. It is still essential to pre-book.

Guided tours for groups may be provided by arrangement. Contact Wendy Nugent, Chapter Steward on 0191 386 4266.

Groups wishing to visit some parts of the cathedral not normally on group itineraries can join precinct tours this year, which include the Prior's Kitchen, Chapter House and the stonemason's yard.

These tours will start at 10.30am every Tuesday and Thursday between 29 May and 8 September from the Bailey Gate.

Contact the Verger's Vestry on 0191 386 2367.



Leeds Castle: Group deals at open-air concerts for the first time

▼ UK

Discounts at Leeds Castle

OPERATORS can hit the high notes on a visit to Leeds Castle this Summer. This is the first time the castle is offering coach group discounts to the annual open air concerts.

These will be on Saturday 24 June and Saturday July 1 and will feature light classical music from the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Carl Davis.

Tickets are £19 a head for coach groups of 15 or more.

Coach groups also benefit from 25 per cent off the standard gate rates, which means adult admission to both the castle and its park is £5.70 compared to the standard price of £7.50.

Lunches from £7.80 to £12 a head are on offer to up to 50 coach passengers in the new waitress service Terrace Room. Also, coach operators can use a system which provides passengers with "menu money" vouchers in £3 and £5 denominations.

These allow coach passengers to choose what and when they eat at a number of outlets in the castle grounds.

Coach drivers and couriers - one per vehicle - receive free admission to the castle and grounds and they are given free meal vouchers.

Coach parking is ample at Leeds Castle and a minibus provides a regular shuttle service for elderly and disabled passengers.

Private tours can be arranged for coach groups outside standard opening hours by prior arrangement.

For more details about coach visits contact Leeds Castle in Kent on 01622 765400

▼ UK

Palace permits down to two per operator

COACH permit allocations for group visits to Buckingham Palace starting in August have been reduced to just two per operator.

Last year up to 12 applications could be made - with no guarantee of all being met - but Palace officials said so many private groups were disappointed they have introduced the restriction "to make it fairer."

But while this may be good news for these groups,

by William Golden

it is not music to the ears of one operator. Dick Fennell, of 1066 Coaches in Hastings, applied for 12 permits last year and received two.

Reapplying this year before the end of the February deadline, he was surprised to hear of the restriction.

He said cutting the permit allowance to just two was unfair and discriminated against operators.

Traffic congestion cannot be a reason, he added, because "on the two trips I did last year, I saw no other coaches."

Over at the Palace, a spokeswoman for the tour organisers said : "Last year we got many calls from groups disappointed at not getting in to Buckingham Palace.

"We have decided to restrict operators to two permits to make it fairer.

"Coach operators will not miss out," added the spokeswoman. "Private groups can apply for a permit and they can then approach the coach operator to organise the trip."

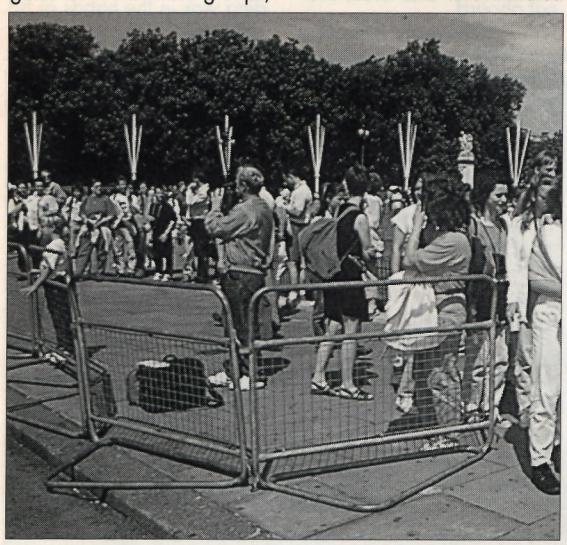
She also said that the decision had not been provoked by traffic congestion.

Back in Hastings, Mr Fennell remained unconvinced.

"The two permits will allow me to take up to 100 passengers.

"I have 350 people on the waiting list. It is going to be a bit of a performance getting them into private groups and then ordering coaches from me."

A case for begging the royal prerogative perhaps...



Room for a queue: All lines led to Buckingham Palace in 1993 when the doors were opened to the public for the first time

On parade: New attractions at war museum

▼ UK

Imperial celebrations

COACH operators can join in the victory celebrations at the Imperial War Museum this Summer to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of World War Two.

New attractions will include a major new gallery and exhibition on the Secret War, opening in July, and three special exhibitions to mark the anniversaries of VE and VJ Days.

These will be:

- **London at War - focusing on civilian life in the capital and featuring a prefab, wartime cinema, Lyons Corner House and BBC studio. This is now open and will run until January 1996;**
- **Channel Islands: Liberation and Occupation 1940-45 - opening in April and running until October, this will tell the story of the only part of the British Isles to be occupied by the Germans; and**
- **Victory in the Far East - this will open in August and relate the harrowing time endured by British PoWs and civilian internees under the Japanese.**

Generous discounts for coach groups will apply for these and other special events.

For more details contact the Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HZ, tel 0171 416 5000. CBW

In association with... WRIGHTSURE Insurance Group

Eurowatch

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WEATHER

City	Average temperature last week	City	Average temperature last week
Athens	18C/68F	Madrid	9C/48F
Amsterdam	7C/45F	Oslo	3C/37F
Berlin	6C/43F	Paris	7C/45F
Brussels	5C/41F	Rome	13C/55F
Dublin	5C/41F	Stockholm	3C/37F
Lisbon	14C/57F	Vienna	6C/43F
Luxembourg	2C/36F	Zurich	3C/37F

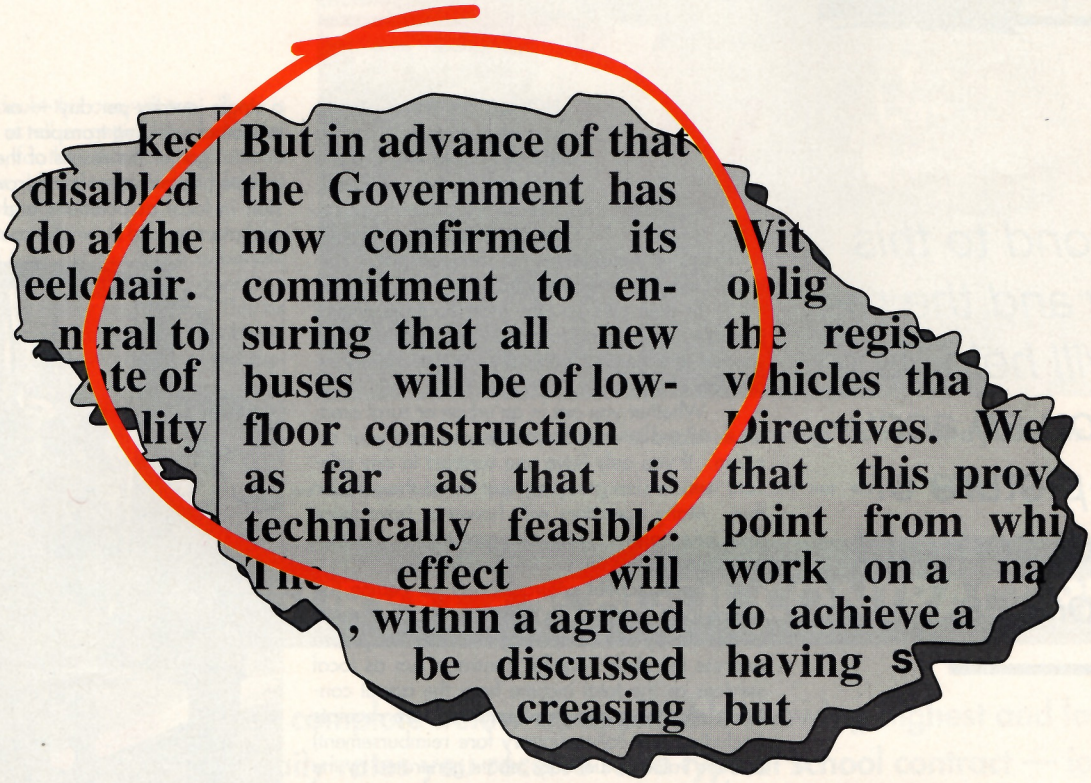
DIESEL PRICES

City	Average temperature last week	City	Average temperature last week
Athens	30C / 86F	Madrid	18C / 64F
Amsterdam	17C/ 63F	Oslo	11C / 52F
Berlin	14C / 57F	Paris	16C / 61F
Brussels	17C / 63F	Rome	28C / 82F
Dublin	15C / 59F	Stockholm	15C / 59F
Lisbon	20C / 68F	Vienna	18C / 64F
Luxembourg	17C / 63F	Zurich	13C / 55F

HOLIDAY POUND

City	Average temperature last week	City	Average temperature last week
Austria	15.90 Sch / £	Italy	2,525 Lire / £
Belgium	46.75 BFr / £	Netherlands	2.55 Gld / £
Denmark	9.13 K/£	Norway	10.05 NKr / £
Eire	0.97 Punt / £	Portugal	237 Es / £
France	7.91 FFr / £	Spain	199.5 Pta / £
Germany	2.27 DM / £	Sweden	11.42 SKr / £
Greece	366 D / £	Switzerland	1.93 SFr / £

Times They Are A' Changing



Ending Discrimination Against Disabled People. A Government White paper presented to Parliament, January 1995

This Government policy suggests that conventional buses with entrance steps will soon be obsolete. So, will operators be faced with uneconomic prices for low-floor buses?

Not now that Scania and Wrights have collaborated to build a brand new bus. It will be along shortly.

SAAB SCANIA

SCANIA

WRIGHT

...QUALITY BY DESIGN...

Every school has its pr

Respond to this survey and the results will help us to give you an accurate picture of school contract prices

WHO has the worst-paying school contract? Who has the best? No this is not a competition, nor will identities of respondents be revealed (even to me). It will, however, be useful to see the range of prices currently being obtained for school contract journeys.

To help give you the most accurate picture possible of prevailing rates for this sort of work responses are needed from all over the country — and lots of them.

Whether you are in an urban or rural area, on an island or in a city, do please send your reply in. If you only have one contract in any relevant vehicle size grouping, just insert the rate for that. Many operators will, however, have more than one contract with different prices. In that case, please give the highest and lowest.

Some school contracts may, of course, be run as local services. To make sure that the results of this survey are comparing like with like please express the daily rate for contracts run as local services as the total income from the actual contract, plus the average of retained fare receipts (including any concessionary fare reimbursement) and the value of fuel duty rebate generated by the work.

Please do not give prices which are for only a single journey per day — or prices that include any other work (eg transport to swimming pools).

I gather the results of the first survey — on private hire prices — have provoked much discussion in local associations and other meetings of operators up and down the country.

Schools: How much do you get?

Change is a healthy course of events

COACH and Bus Week looks different today! Some will like it, but there are always some who prefer to see nothing changed.

I do believe resistance to change is one of the big problems that besets the industry and the coaching side in particular.

There is no future in trying to recreate, or cling on to, the past. The future lies before us all, and it starts right here and now.

We need to be looking at what tomorrow's customers will buy, not what yesterday's enjoyed. We need to be marketing, presenting and selling our services in new and dynamic ways, not just doing what we have always done.

For some, and I hope that I can include myself in this number, change is the antidote to lethargy. I like change, for with it comes challenges and opportunities for those who care to see them.

The let's-keep-it-as-it-was brigade see change as a problem to be avoided or something else they have to learn to live with.

Look what the various deregulatory measures of the 1980s gave to those who cared to pick them up and run with them!

Look how the tour market has swung towards a multiplicity of all-year round mini-breaks — which has all but flattened out the seasonal peaks and troughs of coach operation for those who have awakened to the possibilities.

The future lies before us, and it starts right here and now

Look even at the opportunities the recession has given, with hotels all but giving away bed-nights to those who have negotiating skills and thus profited from the misfortunes of others.

Look at the increased productivity obtained by computerisation (as well as the wealth of data and information that can be instantly available). Look at the brilliant quality of presentational and sales material that can now be done with inexpensive desk-top publishing packages.

And look at those in the industry who have let some or all of these things pass them by, while they sit on their hands and wait for yesterday to re-dawn!

The day-to-day pressures conspire to make owners, proprietors, managers and directors in the coach and bus industry think their job is to ensure things get done in an orderly manner and without hitches.

It isn't! Our most important function is to manage our businesses for change. There is nothing new or changed about that — it's just a fact of life that some of us never knew, or forgot.

ontract
ice

Immense value in knowing trends and patterns

I have little doubt this one will too. There is immense value to us all in getting the feeling of trends and patterns, for they show us the problems and the possibilities. I have never had any faith in cartels or price-fixing agreements.

They do not usually work and are of dubious legality. But I do believe there is benefit gained from frank discussion between operators about general pricing policy and levels. This all becomes so much more meaningful if it is based on factual knowledge rather than rumour and supposition.

I, therefore, urge all readers to respond to this survey, for whatever it shows, you can use the results to your advantage. CBW

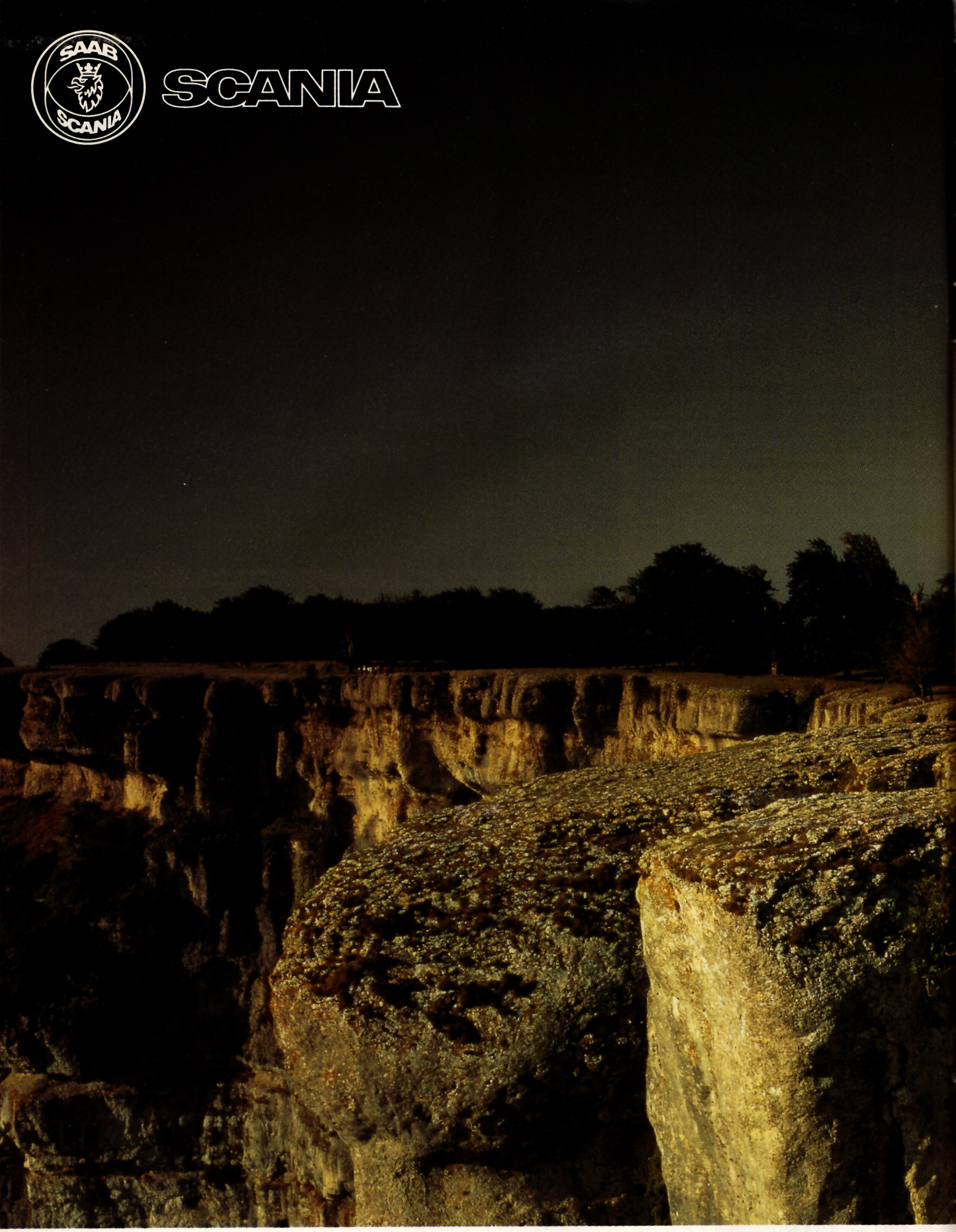
RESEARCH FILE SURVEY - SCHOOL CONTRACT PRICES

Please complete below as applicable showing highest and lowest current daily rates you receive for a typical school contract — ie one taking up to an hour each school-day morning and afternoon involving a total daily mileage of up to approx 60 miles or 100 km. Please exclude the cost of providing any escorts or attendants.

Return this form to Mike Morgan, Editor, *Coach and Bus Week*, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough, PE1 1DS

CBW RESEARCH FILE

	Minibus 12-16 seats	Midibus 17-39 seats	Full size 40-53 seats
HIGHEST DAILY RATE	£	£	£
LOWEST DAILY RATE	£	£	£
County or region in which operating centre is based:			



"Again And

"We took delivery of two Scania Century coaches with Comfort Shift gearboxes 18 months ago. They've

Again♫ *by* **Scania**

performed superbly. That's why we've bought two more" – John Shaw, Director, Harry Shaw Travel.

Government is leading us on a road to nowhere

From Alan Sledmore

What a shambles this Government has made of the public transport issue, moreover, they go from bad to worse. Similarly they firmly believe a success has been achieved with their ludicrous policies, which are at best the policies of the madhouse.

We had Nicholas Ridley, back in 1985 with his vision of Britain, going from the nation of shopkeepers, to a nation of self-employed bus drivers — to deregulate the buses, to encourage competition and stop monopolies.

Now we have Steven Norris telling us how dreadful it is to use public transport, with all those dreadful human beings.

He much prefers to use his car and advocates others do also.

Dr Mawhinney tells us how transport interchanges are needed, yet they still build railway and bus stations at opposite sides of town and city centres. Moreover, he makes the amazing statement that "it is too easily forgotten that transport is all about providing a service to customers" and the public at large have been central to the thinking of Government over the last 15 years.

The cost of travelling on the railway has become prohibitive, the cost of travelling by coach is reasonable.

So the logic is to slow down the coaches, by the outside lane ban on motorways. This, of course, in the interests of safety and, just to prove it, they cut the number of vehicle examiners by 25 per cent.

The truth is, public transport is despised by the Tories. There has never been a time when the industry has been in such a mess. The Government is clueless on transport policy.

The deregulation issue, which it believes to be such a great success, has been nothing but a complete disaster. It has led to vast reductions in living standards for the whole of the workforce, reduced services on all but the busiest of routes, bus wars on such routes, and the danger this type of competition presents to drivers, and passengers.

We still have the archaic domestic regulations which allow companies to flout the law in every imaginable way. As a health and safety representative I find it hard to believe anything this Government says.

Safety must be rule number one. The truth is money is rule one. The management of present-day companies seems to love inexperience, the undercutting that is forcing many companies out of business or the cutting back on maintenance standards.

Out of all this gloom there is a light, if we could only see it. There is an urgent need for a modern transport system. Many people are finding the economics of running a car beyond their means. People will switch from using cars but the service has to be regular, reliable, at the same minutes of each hour, and the fares must be reasonable. Mothers should also be encouraged to put children on to school buses, rather than adding to the congestion at peak hours of the day.

We have been directed down a road to nowhere, and we are still on that road. No doubt when this inept administration finally calls it a day, we will see the return of route registration. Then we will have gone full circle, with the ex-National Bus companies merging with the municipals under an umbrella of three or four large companies — which was all that was required before all the upheaval and rigmarole of the last 10 years began.

Alan Sledmore
Hest Bank
Lancaster

Which is which?

From the Scarecrow

In practical terms how is it possible to distinguish between a 'predatory' duplicate (more than likely empty) and a genuine duplicate dispatched in good faith to a busy outer terminus on a market day? Will we see Steve Norris standing at a bus stop outside a football ground explaining to fans that it would have been illegal for the bus company to dispatch the second bus any sooner in case demand did not justify it?

It wasn't until the first bus had arrived full at the ground that the second bus was called for (meanwhile the competitor's drivers have parked their buses at the depot and gone to the match).

Most customers were picked up after leaving the bus station.

How can these be objectively distinguished?

Is there anything to stop 'predatory' duplicates running around out of service until they spot a decent load to pick up?

Would you by a second-hand car from this man?

The Scarecrow

It's time to protest

From Richard Wootton

With regard to the third-lane ban for coaches is it not time operators made a stand and made ourselves heard. We have tried putting our case forward by normal means but to no avail, so now is the time to do what other groups do when they want change.

Protest, cause a nuisance, let's block Parliament Square with our vehicles, let's travel around the M25 in a convoy, get our protest on the television, on radio, in newspapers, it's the only way that this Government will listen.

Increasing numbers of regulations over the years, from tachometers to speed limiters, changes to fire extinguishers and the largest school bus signs have all been in the interests of safety. Now all this will be thrown away by making us the sandwich filling between 40-tonne lorries on our motorways.

So come on, let's shout from the roof tops and send our message out far and wide, let our customers know that their lives will be put at risk by this ban, stand up for ourselves.

Richard Wootton
25 Whaddon Close
West Hunsbury
Northampton

Stagecoach gets a bloody a nose

From A Reader

So Brian Souter considered his company's foray into South Manchester was a success and that some high-density routes can sustain two operators! If I were a Stagecoach shareholder or one of the CIT delegates listening as reported (*Coach and Bus Week*, 28 January) I would be asking, very strongly, on what basis he makes such as judgments.

At the time of the privatisation of GM Buses, everyone in Manchester was aware that if Stagecoach couldn't acquire one or other of the new companies by normal means, alternative methods would be looked into.

The start of Stagecoach services on route 192 (Manchester-Stockport-Hazel Grove) was a very aggressive and preemptive attack to warn off other operators or investors, with large numbers of highly visible new buses charging suicidal fares (£2 weekly tickets for any distance — Yes, WEEKLY!) that were aimed squarely at a demoralised public-sector operator while, after the ESOP privatisation, it was against a fledgling company that had just inherited an ageing fleet and a huge bank loan around its neck. We all assume that Stagecoach's intention was simply to kill-off GM South at birth! The rhetoric and fine words reported in the article do nothing to change our minds.

The commencement of a retaliatory service between Manchester, Burnley and Nelson by GM South's Charterplan subsidiary last Spring came as an unpleasant shock to Stagecoach management and their reaction has been anything but as welcoming as one would expect from Mr Souter's reported pronouncements.

The profitability of one of their most successful services has been effectively destroyed and it is this, linked with GMS's stubborn refusal to submit on the 192 service, that has recently persuaded Stagecoach to the understanding that, while its excursion into South Manchester might well have succeeded in attracting very heavy passenger loads, the cost to date is most likely in excess of £500,000 and that the co-existence of two operators on one service depends upon co-operation and not the tactics for which Stagecoach has become so notorious.

Name and address supplied

Thanks to you all

From Euan Finlayson

Thanks to all the operators who contacted us offering Chapman seats for our AEC Reliance. We got a set within two days of the story being published. Our coach is being refurbished at present and will be rolled out the workshops by the end of next month.

Euan Finalayson
Managing director
Prestige Tours
Hillington
Glasgow

LETTER OF THE WEEK

Short-sighted and ill-informed attitude over tour protection

From Annette Horn

We are recently informed by Barclays Merchant services they intend to introduce a minimum monthly charge.

As our credit card transactions are minimal we decided to cancel our agreements with them. As an alternative we contacted National Westminster with a view to accepting Access and were informed that a minimum monthly charge was not applied. However, they were not able to help us as we are not members of ABTA or ATOL.

As we are solely coach operators and our only business is operating our own vehicles, mainly within the UK, it would be ludicrous to be a member of ATOL. We are in no way connected with the airline industry.

Membership of ABTA bears slightly more relation to our business as we occasionally provide tours, in the main for groups who have requested specific destinations. This would form approximately five per cent of our annual turnover.

Under the EEC directive on package holidays we have to meet all the requirements. We have expanded our public liability insurance to cover the specifications of the directive and, as we do so few tours, have opted for financial failure insurance, this meeting our needs more practically and economically than a bond.

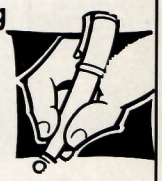
This insurance has been in place since the directive became effective. We have had an impromptu visit from our local trading standards officer who was completely and totally satisfied that we were meeting the requirements of the directive in every way.

Why then should anyone insist that we should be members of a specific organisation such ABTA? Being solely coach operators, selling only our own in-house tours, should we at any future stage feel that a bond would be more suitable to our needs, we would apply to the Confederation of Passenger Transport, which provides bonding much more suited and specialised to our business.

We related all of the above to one of Nat West's sales personnel in a telephone conversation but his standard reply was that his hands were tied. It is no consequence to our business whether or not we accept credit cards but we do question their short-sighted and apparently ill-informed attitude.

Annette Horn
See-More Travel
125 East End Road
East Finchley
London N2

Write to: The Editor
Coach and Bus Week
EMAP Response Publishing
Wentworth House
Wentworth Street,
Peterborough, PE11DS
or fax 01733 62656



The editor is always pleased to receive letters for publication in *Coach and Bus Week* and will, if requested, publish these anonymously.
But please attach your name and address for our information.

Letter of the week wins a Corgi Classics model bus

Award for Sheffield

From Tony Fawthrop

Your correspondent Martin Perry of the Bromyard Omnibus company nominates Hereford City Council for the 'Most Ridiculous Authority of the year' award because of its action in blaming buses for pollution etc (*Coach and Bus Week*, 11 February).

May I challenge that claim and nominate Sheffield City Council, whose long-term policy is to ban all buses from city centre roads and whose short-term aim is to make life as difficult as possible for bus operators by abolishing bus stops, removing buses from certain key roads and banning vital turns.

Our largest operator, Mainline, reckoned that 24 city centre bus stops had been abolished and as buses become squeezed into fewer and fewer roads the city council blames them for causing congestion and pollution. Everyone agrees the most important objective for bus passengers is the block containing the three main markets and other important shops.

The bus stops on all four sides of the block were the busiest in town yet the council managed to abolish the stops on three sides of the block. Not surprisingly the fourth side became heavily congested so the council narrowed the road at certain crucial spots then proposed to drastically limit the number of buses allowed to use the road, which would have meant many services being totally unable to serve the area where they are most needed.

This was only averted by one operator parking a bus illegally all morning on double yellow lines, videoing the result and proving in cooperation with other operators that a bus stop and layby could be safely reinstated on an adjoining road.

In another instance the city council shut a main thoroughfare and banned turns which would have made it impossible for services from a large part of Sheffield to serve the city centre at all.

Again the operators acting together found a novel way round the ban which did allow buses to serve the main shopping area to some extent. Bus services frequently go in circles or even figures of eight to reach the vital stops.

Some services cross the city centre four times in north-south directions to travel a quarter of a mile in west-east direction, crossing the service in the opposite direction four times in the process. Can anyone explain how this cuts down congestion? It does wonders, however, in confusing the passengers. On top of all this we have had years of Supertram construction, the council's Heat & Power Scheme pipe laying and Yorkshire Cable television cable laying all constantly shutting roads and creating diversions.

The amazing thing is that many bus passengers still persist in coming into central Sheffield, though the large number of empty shops and market stalls testify that many have given up the unequal struggle and gone elsewhere such as Meadowhall with its adjoining bus and rail stations and its 20,000 free car park spaces.

The city council's stated policy is to ban buses from central Sheffield except Superbuses, by which they mean electro-diesel buses using electricity in central Sheffield. When the head of the council's policy transportation unit said this at a public meeting he was asked who would pay for the cost of such vehicles at £600,000 a time? His reply was: "Yes, that is a problem, maybe Europe could help!" One could go on and on but space forbids.

I submit that, with council policies like these, Sheffield surely outweighs Hereford's claims.

Tony Fawthrop
17 Silverdale Road
Ecclesall
Sheffield

Low-floor conference

From Diane Lea

I write with reference to low-floor buses (*Coach and Bus Week*, 21 January).

DaRT's Buses for All 95 Conference on 16 June is designed to cover many of the issues raised in your article. At this conference we hope to provide a forum for the debate on the viability of low-floor buses and bring together all those interested in transport; the general public, bus manufacturers and operators, MPs and European Minister of Transport.

The Conference has already received European support.

Just before the Conference DaRT will publish the results of a survey on bus operators' and manufacturers' views on low-floor vehicles.

St Margarets
25 Leighton Road
London
NW5

KENYAN DIARY

By Andrew Jarosz

Food parcels await distribution

Christmas fare

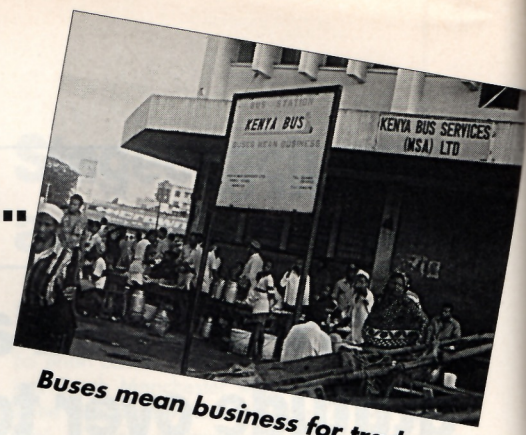
HOW do you organise a Christmas dinner for your staff, and still keep all the buses running? - Ask Stagecoach KBS, which set up a barbecue for its 3,000 road staff at Nairobi. Operations started at dawn, and the queue of employees snaked round the workshops all day, while roasting took place, giving a whole new dimension to the feeding of the 5,000.

Not forgetting the rest of the family, KBS also had food parcels for everyone to take home after their duties ended - and the only part of the festivities that was missing was the Christmas tree and carol singing, which might have seemed out of place in a tropical setting.

If you can't beat them...

STAGECOACH'S message that 'Buses mean Business' seems more than inappropriate at Mombasa bus station, where a whole network of food and drink stalls surrounds the office block. Trading however, envelops all the central streets of this coastal city, and the pavements are full of stalls and pedlars, who even surround the bus station departure stands with displays of their wares.

Not to be outdone, KBS has got itself into the selling mode and is disposing of its underused office block and moving administration to a makeshift facility which will be parked in a corner of the bus station.



Buses mean business for traders

Strange but true

ONE of the strangest competitors that KBS has to contend with is Nyayo Bus Services, which is owned by the Government and operates buses gifted from western nations. Over 200 buses are owned, but because of a shortage of spares, only around 30 turn out for service every day.

No photographs of the Nyayo depot can be printed because of the ban on photography of Government installations but, after talking one's way through three sets of armed guards, one can see relatively new vehicles standing on bricks and being cannibalised for spares.

The company's traffic manager wasn't available for a comment! CBW

Gift horse for the Government

● Kenya Feature pages 35&36

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▼ On Tour UK

A truly National Show

From all over the British Isles comes information and useful contacts

by Andrew Jarosz

BTTF '95 at the NEC, Birmingham, 22-23 March, will bring together destinations, attractions and accommodation from all corners of the British Isles.

It is organised by the English Tourist Board on behalf of the English, Scottish, Wales and Northern Ireland Tourist Boards and the British Tourist Authority.

New Road to Wales

Welsh exhibitors are taking more space at this year's show, with new attractions and hotels in the line-up. Among them is the impressive Cardiff Bay Inner Harbour development, where Britain's largest hands-on science centre, Techniquest, and the biggest Harry Ramsden's fish and chips restaurant yet - a 375 seater - are being added this year.

Swansea, Gower and the West Wales peninsula are expecting more day trip and short tours business as a result of the M4 extension which should cut as much as 40 minutes off journey times.

More Scottish Attractions

Scotland comes to the show determined to entice more visitors from the south of the border. New attractions like Vikingar! at Largs and the Mill Trail Visitor Centre at Alva, Clackmannanshire, will be introducing themselves to the coach trade and there will be news of special events both this year and next.

Edinburgh hosts the Cutty Sark Tall Ships Race in July, and Glasgow is gearing up for the opening of a new Gallery of Modern Art as part of its Glasgow '96 campaign. Events all over the Highlands this Summer will mark the 250th anniversary of the Jacobite uprising and a new Jacobite Centre telling the tale of Bonnie Prince Charlie's exploits opens at Inverness.

Bright Prospects for Irish Tours

Exhibitors from Northern Ireland will be in optimistic mood, anticipating more tours into the province from other parts of the UK.

Several new and refurbished hotels are taking stands at the show. Belfast will be promoting itself as a short-break destination and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board will have its new Group and Travel Trade manual ready for BTTF visitors. Staff are looking forward to talking tours over a glass of Caffery's Irish ale on their stand.

Anniversary Celebrations

All the English regional tourist boards will be at the show and destinations countrywide will be suggesting new ideas for tour itineraries and giving out copies of their new or updated group tour manuals.

Many exhibitors have programmes of special events linked to this year's Festival of Arts and Culture. A host of anniversaries are also being celebrated, not least Durhams's millennium.

Stoke on Trent and the Potteries are planning events. CBW

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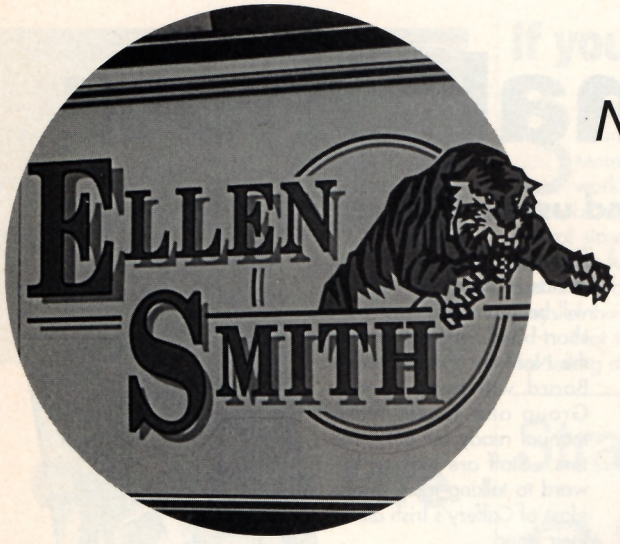


Now owned by a municipal bus company, Ellen Smith Tours remains as focused on coaching as ever. Alan Millar reports

Tigers on tour

WHEN Rossendale Transport bought Ellen Smith Tours four years ago, it acquired a rich slice of Lancashire history — and firmly established itself in the coach travel market of the dozens of former mill towns which cling to the Pennines between the Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire conurbations.

Ellen Smith Tours had been in Rochdale for over 90 years and was still — just — in family ownership. Harry Smith, one of Ellen's grandsons, had died, his widow and brother wanted to retire and there was no one in the company to whom they could sell.

This was an ideal opportunity for local authority-owned Rossendale to step in. It had expanded its bus operations into Greater Manchester with a base in Rochdale and its then six-year-old Rossendale Coach Hire division was establishing a toehold in the market.

Rossendale managing director Leonard Green is a relative rarity in the council-owned bus sector: A manager as committed to coaches as buses. Since joining Leicester City Transport in the mid-sixties, he had been heavily involved in private hire and coach work as he progressed through the industry and a high-profile, locally-respected name was too good a chance to pass up.

All of Rossendale's coaches are now run as Ellen Smith and the fleet is nearly twice the size it was in 1991. It's also newer and offers a wider choice of holidays.

The Smiths usually bought one new coach a year, but Rossendale has smoothed out the age profile with judicious purchases of late model used coaches, mainly Leyland Tigers and Volvo B10Ms with Van Hool bodies.

All are painted in an updated version of the traditional Ellen Smith livery with prominent Tiger logos used since the company first bought Leyland Tiger coaches back in the 1930s.

Tiger logos are also woven into the Holdsworth moquette custom-designed for the company's coach seats and the theme is carried into the brochure to highlight inclusive Tiger Value "extras" on some tours - features like full English breakfast on an outward journey or distillery visits added to a Scottish tour.

When Rossendale bought it, Ellen Smith was still adjusting to the end of the traditional wakes weeks when the mills and supporting factories of each town shut down and most of the population took to the seaside.

Its destinations were predictable and nearly all British and the holidays were complemented by an excursion programme which was more extensive than profitable.

It still runs to most of the traditional destinations and caters primarily for the over-50s market, but Mr Green says it is generating business from what he calls the new over-50s.

"It's true that they are not used to going by coach but we find once we convert them to a coach holiday, we get repeat bookings. Many of them are converting from using their cars rather than going on air holidays. These are people who don't want the hassle of driving on busy motorways."

So, while Blackpool (served by a daily Ellen Smith express coach service from east Lancashire), Llandudno and other seaside resorts remain popular destinations and the older customers still prefer to travel at their own particular wakes weeks, tastes are changing and the old resorts are losing their appeal.

Llandudno remains popular, Mr Green says, because of the efforts made by North Wales Tourism to attract visitors, but — echoing other operators' experience — Bournemouth is proving very difficult to sell while Eastbourne is gaining in appeal. He is as mystified as others about what is Bournemouth's problem — some blame it on the resort's hills.

The excursion programme has been slimmed down,

Fact file

Name:	**Ellen Smith Tours**
Ownership:	**Sister company of Rossendale Transport which also owns Estelle Travel Centres**
Fleet:	**27 coaches, mostly single-deck but including one double-decker. Part of total Rossendale/ Ellen Smith fleet of 110 vehicles**
Depots:	**Rawtenstall and Rochdale**
Managing director:	**Leonard Green**

Tiger logos have been part of the livery since the 1930s

but Continental holidays have been added with a selection which includes Paris, Bruges and Amsterdam, the Austrian Tyrol, the Italian lakes and Dutch bulbfields as well as Berlin, eastern European capitals, the Rioja region of northern Spain and Swedish lakes.

It's based too far north of the Channel ports to be able to sell French hypermarket shopping trips but the short Channel crossings are more cost-effective than the longer crossings from Hull for most of the Continental programme.

This year, Ellen Smith will use the Channel Tunnel Le Shuttle service for its Paris trips, which attract younger customers. "We're doing it because of the novelty, the reliability and because it gives a different angle to the Paris weekends," says Mr Green.

"I've been through the tunnel and I'm not worried about the product. I see there being two markets because it's nice to sail in good weather but, if the weather's bad, people will wish they had gone underground."

The overall aim is to offer quality and value for money. Most holidays are centred on 3-Star or equivalent hotels, some of which have Les Routiers status for their food, and the company has instituted a National Vocational Qualification programme for its drivers, taking in customer care, defensive driving and legislation updates.

Coaches on Grand Luxe holidays are painted in a distinctive livery and customers are guaranteed coaches with a toilet, servery and video.

Mr Green says the company is having to adjust to the trend for people taking more, but shorter holidays. "This is partly because senior citizens' incomes are being squeezed, so they're either trading down on the length or quality of holidays." Ellen Smith won't compromise on quality, so its longest British Isles holidays are spread over eight days and no Continental holiday lasts longer than 10.

But another acquisition has created scope to sell a cheaper product that doesn't compromise Ellen Smith's reputation. It bought out Hardman's, a Rossendale coach company, a couple of years ago and turned it into a budget-priced brand called Hardman's Happy Holiday with its own cheaper unillustrated brochure.

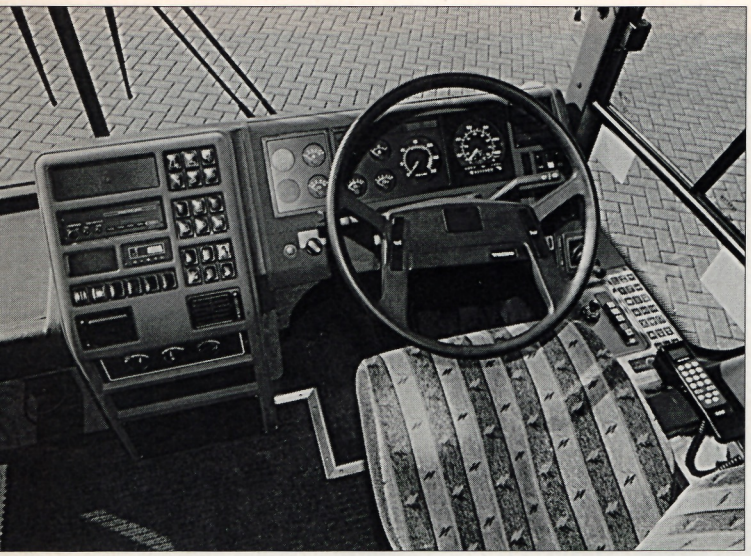
To combat competition from other operators, heavily marketed newspaper offers and the newer trend of resort hotels offering their own coach holiday programmes, Ellen Smith is expanding its sales operations.

Rossendale's own chain of five ABTA-bonded Estelle Travel Centres is complemented by 50 agents, 40 of whom have been appointed over the past six months.

The recent appointment of John White, from Chesterfield Transport's Whites of Calver division, as tour manager is part of a move to further expand the tour programme and develop more business with individuals and groups (*Coach and Bus Week*, 28 January).

In an ever-changing market, there is no place for the operator which stands still. CBW

Continental holidays are taking the place of excursions



Good layout and responsive controls

Expressliner Mark II has changed. Mike Morgan's road test assesses its fitness for use as an express coach while examining Plaxton's on-going product development

Automatic choice

IF you need proof Plaxton has improved its Premiere/Excalibur range beyond all recognition you need look no further than the latest Expressliner variant to emerge from its Scarborough plant. *Coach and Bus Week* took this Volvo B10M-chassied coach on a test to remember. We met unpredicted challenges — strong gusty winds, torrential rain, snow and fog. Our 316-mile round trip may be a fraction of an Expressliner's daily workload, but it was an endurance test for men and machine.

Our test vehicle is one of four which went into service with Wessex of Bristol at the turn of the year. It has to work hard for a living on a 1,200-mile diagram taking it from its Bristol base in the early hours of the morning on the 3.15am run to Gatwick.

From there it heads north on a 22-hour return trip to Glasgow before returning to Bristol next morning. Then, at 3.15am, it's back again on the same track.

Work of this type requires a reliable coach resilient to non-stop use and frequent change of driver. Wessex managing director Mike Ogborne says he is more than happy with the latest product. We found out why.

He said: "Plaxton has listened to the operators. Everytime they have upgraded they have improved it."

Aircraft-style racks and spacious seat layout

Recent modifications include:

- Three-piece windscreen;
- Heavy-duty pantograph wipers;
- Rubbish chutes to the rear boot from two-tier servery and saloon-mounted toilet on Rapide-spec vehicles.

Like most Expressliner operators, Wessex is a subsidiary of one of the big groups — in this case Badgerline. It is a Nat Ex specialist running 35 Expressliners, 12 Leyland Nationals and four coaches for UK private hire.

Plaxton says there are an increasing number of smaller coach companies placing orders for new coaches — including some working on Nat Ex diagrams. So Expressliner Mark II with its obvious affinity with its Interurban, Premiere and Excalibur cousins is a benchmark for Plaxton quality in 1995.

Background

The Expressliner ancestral line goes back over five years to the launch of National Expressliners Ltd, a joint-venture Plaxton/National Express company, and the first Paramount-derived vehicle aimed at spreading uniformity across Nat Ex routes.

Standardisation from Penzance to Inverness may have been the target but operators had a limited menu of options. It was ok if you wanted to accept the terms of the lease-only agreement with Roadlease, the Henlys Group finance arm, and you were happy with Volvo chassis, G7 gearbox and Plaxton body. Otherwise forget it.

Nevertheless, over 150 vehicles found their way on to the network and five years later the first of these pioneers are coming back off lease. They are being refurbished by Kirkby and prepared for sale, used vehicle stock or the expanding Kirkby/Roadlease rental fleet which is expected to include up to 75 coaches this year — its third season.

The electro-pneumatic seven-speed Volvo G7 gearbox is replaced with ZF manual and, according to customer requirements, servery removed, seats re-moquetted and window-less back remodelled with either the Nat Ex flash filled in or rear window fitted.

Lease or purchase

Although these Mark I vehicles struggled against entrenched industry resistance to being told what to operate they did make a significant impact on the Nat Ex image and acted as the mould for the next generation when Plaxton revamped its coach range at the end of 1991.

Towards the end of their reign too many Paramount Expressliners ended up in stock. National Expressliners Ltd decided operators could also buy rather than lease.

Transition from Mark I to Mark II followed and the conditions of Nat Ex contracts relaxed to the point where some operators bought and upgraded standard vehicles and other

Plaxton body and Volvo chassis

manufacturers entered the fray.

Consequently the concept of the take-it or leave-it Expressliner has changed. Stuart Smith, sales manager for Roadlease and National Expressliners, says there is now a much wider choice. Today you can buy or lease. It comes with or without contract maintenance.

There's a choice of Volvo or Dennis chassis — the first two joined South Wales Transport late last year. And, when you complete your finishing instructions, options include Britech destination gear, Webasto heating, and upholstery can be to the customer's own spec.

This last option can only apply when the coach is not on an operating lease (normally five years). If operators expect to keep the Expressliner beyond the seven-year maximum life in Nat Ex service then own moquette makes sense.

Although based at Anston, the home of Plaxton sister companies Kirkby and Roadlease, National Expressliners is a separate entity. It is a direct supply/sell operation which sources its own chassis and orders from the bodybuilder. Mr Smith said: "There is no dealer involved. An operator can acquire a vehicle at net cost."

Consequently the Expressliner package is competitive.

Our test coach with Plaxton Premiere 350 bodywork to Rapide spec on Volvo B10M with automatic gearbox costs £152,000. A manual gearbox and Telma retarder saves £4,000 whereas non-Rapide vehicles are £12,000 less. Seatbelts on all seats, standard on 1995 build, add £1,500 to the price.

Roadlease-funded packages vary according to fixed or variable interest and factors specific to each operator, but a five-year operating lease without contract maintenance will cost between £1,800 and £2,000 per month.

From early 1992 69 Premiere Mark II Expressliners have been put into service. Of these 53 have taken the new automatic gearbox option. This majority vote is contrary to a customer survey prior to the vehicle's launch, but represents a trend projected into 1995.

New and repeat customers are to take 32 coaches but, significantly, stock build should take the total number of Mark IIs up to 140 by the end of the year.

Demand for Expressliners is naturally subject to fluctuation in line with the seasonal allocation of contracts. Already 43 vehicles have transferred around the network and Mr Smith hopes stock availability will minimise the possibility of business lost to other suppliers.

For passenger and driver

Apart from ubiquitous Nat Ex candy-stripe livery there is more to Expressliner Mark II than discreet badging.

It is a package which meets the need of the express coach operator.

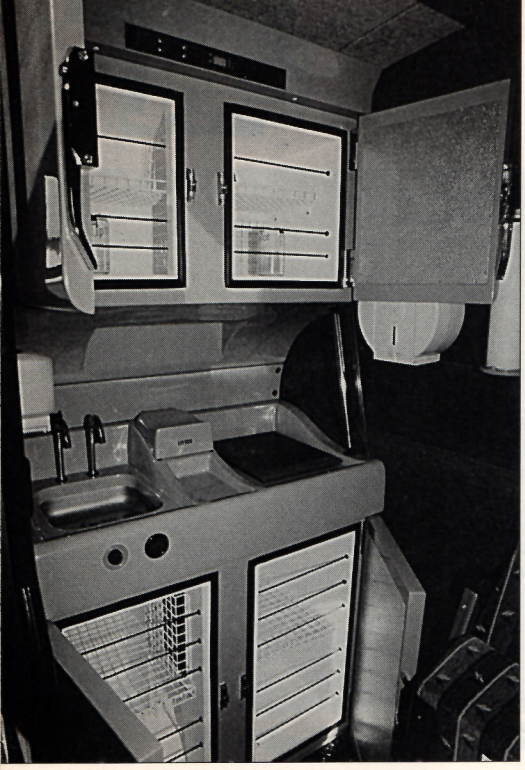
A large destination box with yellow on black roller blinds proclaims its intentions. Bright red handrails greet the passenger and the rear floor-mounted servery/toilet area is purposeful in its design and layout.

Gaps above and to one side of these units may quickly accumulate rubbish but they are built for quick removal without damage to roof and side panels during later refurbishment.

For the driver it is a coach made easy to drive with automatic gearchange and responsive performance. In addition the locker arrangement is specific to pavement loading of luggage. The rear boot door door is locked in preparation for its second-life.

However, the 44-seat layout of this Rapide-spec coach is a model for touring operation. It has recliners, plenty of leg-room, footrests, aircraft-style roof-rack locker doors and a heating system which keeps an even temperature throughout the saloon.

Engine intrudes into luggage space



Shades demountable servery

It represents a level of quality far in excess of the popular misconception that coach travel is cheap and cheerful. Passengers may dislike their vision restricted by the destination box.

Drivers have to get accustomed to high-set offside mirror, wipers which do not clear vision of the nearside mirror, and the angled pillars which make over-the-shoulder visibility difficult. But this vehicle is comfortable and fit for its purpose.

It has 286bhp engined Volvo GL chassis with ZF automatic gearbox. Gearchange selector and handbrake are perfectly positioned to the right and the vehicle delivers express levels of performance. A pity there is no suitable left footrest.

Pick up from standstill is brisk, particularly useful when entering roundabouts, and acceleration in the 50mph to 60mph band is very good.

Acceleration from 0-30mph is two seconds faster than a marginally lighter Van Hool-bodied manual B10M (*Coach and Bus Week*, 31 June 1993). Otherwise performance is a close match and the automatic feels faster than the stop watch suggests because this gearchange is the smoothest experienced on a *Coach and Bus Week* test. Up and down shifts are very well disguised, adding refinement for the passenger and a confidence boost for the driver.

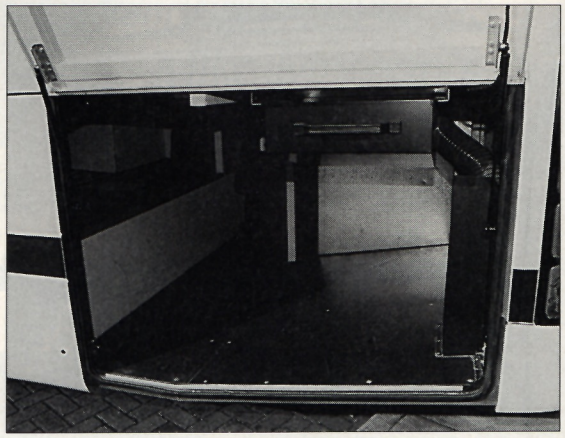
Type of use impacts on fuel consumption. Wessex gets around 10mpg on its long motorway runs and the test route was definitely a game of two halves.

Constant speed on the motorway produced an exceptionally good 11.71mpg but our rigorous Nat Ex simulation got this to 8.78mpg. Equivalent figures on the manual-gearboxed B10M were 11.4mpg and 9.75mpg.

The trick is to keep within the green band and the gearbox was on top of its job with the rev-counter needle swinging obediently between 1,100rpm at 30mph in fourth and 1,850rpm at 65mph in top.

Verdict

Our run was from Peterborough, home of *Coach and Bus Week*, via Anston to pick up Plaxton sales stalwart Bob Walmsley, who volunteered to go ahead to collect supplies for the empty servery.



Rear boot has waste disposal drawer

His aim was in the best interests of simulating Rapide standards of service but little did we know how great our need was to become.

Scheduled timings to Manchester via Woodhead before a motorway return using M62, M1 and A1 were geared to Nat Ex's timetable. But this does not allow for roads closed by snow, roadworks, seized-up M62 or packed snow and fog on the top of the Pennines. A detour and atrocious conditions added 65 minutes to the outward journey. Yet this only served to amplify the good impression the Expressliner had already created. Throughout it behaved impeccably. As the west face of the Pennines resembled a ski-slope it was ironic that we had an appointment on the Hyde Road skid pan of GM Buses South. With ABS and superb integral retarder to aid control the B10M did not so much as twitch. It treated the whole exercise as though it was born to cope with the challenge. Indeed this coach commands respect. It is built to do a particular job and our test confirmed that it can do that job very well. CBW

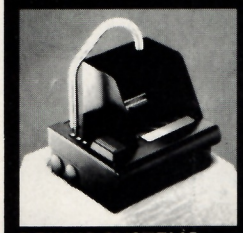
Making most of space

National Expressliner Specification

Chassis:	Volvo B10M GL
Body:	Plaxton Expressliner
Price:	£152,000
Engine:	Volvo THD 102KB
Capacity:	9.6 litres
Power:	286 bhp (210 kW) @ 2,200 rpm
Torque:	885 Lbf ft (1200 Nm) @ 1,250 rpm
Gearbox:	ZF 5HP590 five-speed auto Steering: ZF power assisted column adjustable for height and rake - 50 cm steering wheel
Brakes:	Full air system Front and rear: Drums Handbrake: Spring release ABS fitted
Retarder:	Two-stage integral Operation: Foot brake
Suspension:	Full air system with ferry lift
Front axle:	Beam axle/two air bags/anti-roll bar
Drive axle:	Single reduction hypoid type EV85 with 4.25:1 ratio - four air bags/anti-roll bar
Tyres:	315/80R x 22.5
Speedlimiter:	Econocruise
Options:	ZF S6-85 six-speed manual
DIMENSIONS	
Length:	12 metres
Width:	2.5 metres
Height:	3.5 metres
Wheelbase:	5.95 metres
Unladen weight:	12,934 kg
GVW:	17,000 kg
PERFORMANCE	
Acceleration:	0-30 mph - 10 secs 0-50 mph - 25 secs 50-65 mph in top gear - 15 secs
Fuel economy:	1,200-mile two-day National Express diagram, Bristol-Gatwick-Glasgow-Gatwick-Bristol, operated by Wessex of Bristol - 10 mpg Test average - 9.76 mpg Motorway section - 11.71 mpg Cross-country section - 8.78 mpg Noise levels at 65 mph: Front - 72 dB(A), Middle - 68 dB(A) Rear - 70 dB(A)

Waterways

Water systems and fittings for Coaches and Buses



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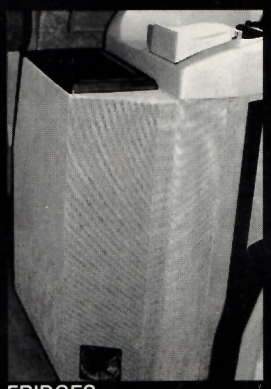
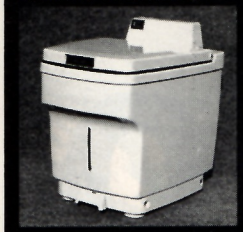


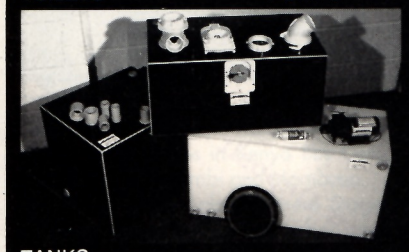
FRIDGES

CHEMICALS



TOILETS

PUMPS



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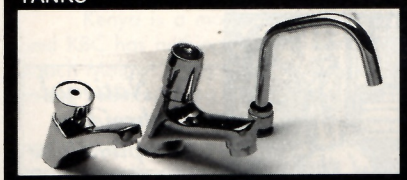

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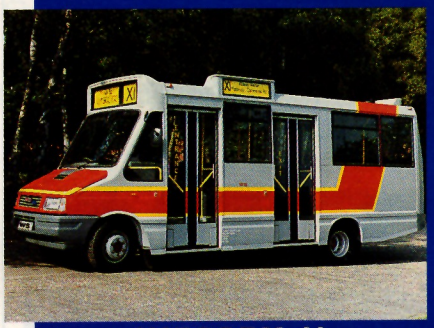

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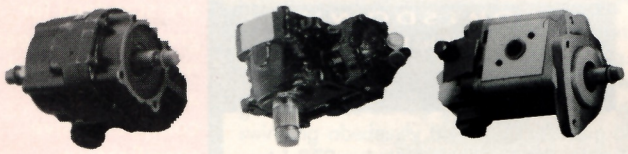

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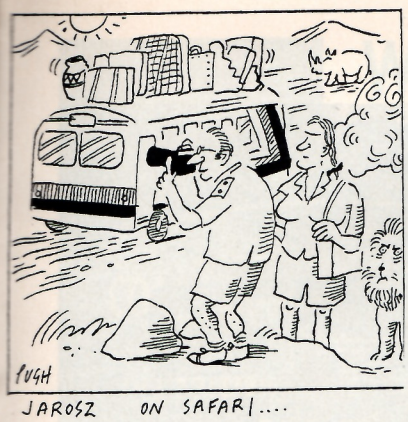


Andrew Jarosz takes a busman's holiday in Africa and catches up with Stagecoach in Kenya

Out of Africa

ONLY five years ago Stagecoach International made its first venture into Africa. United Transport was quite eager to move out of its bus operations, and the business in Malawi was purchased. Three years ago, Stagecoach doubled its presence with the acquisition of UTI's interest in Kenya which involved the purchase of the majority shares in Kenya Bus Company with its citywide operations in Nairobi and Mombasa.

Unlike in Malawi, where Stagecoach undertakes the whole spectrum of city, interurban and, indeed, pan-African operations, operations in Kenya are totally urban.

Kenya is a more developed and prosperous country and KBC has nothing like the monopoly of services Stagecoach Malawi enjoys, particularly as bus operation has a strong tradition going back over 60 years.

In terms of economic activity, Kenya is one of the more prosperous and more Western in outlook of most African countries. Its cities are the trade hubs of East Africa and downtown Nairobi is as prestigious a capital city as any in the developed world.

Prosperity, of course, is a relative term and despite the new-style Western democracy now in place, an equitable distribution of wealth is no nearer than it was in the days of the British Empire.

With inflation, escalating national debt, a population explosion, a shortage of jobs, additional Somalian refugees and occasional droughts, actual living standards have been eroded in the last 10 years, thus putting heavier pressure upon transport and welfare services.

There is a genuine national ethos of self-betterment and hard work reflected in the widespread quest for literacy, political awareness and the demand for secondary education, which has to be paid for.

Bureaucracy and Western values also proliferate, thus the local transport situation is regulated after a fashion, although it is debatable whether everyone plays to the rules.

Stagecoach KBS thus finds itself in the invidious position of trying hard to provide comprehensive transport services, but trapped by a shortage of resources to match the demand.

KBS currently operates around 60 buses in Mombassa and over 320 in Nairobi, which makes its only garage there the largest in the whole group. Composed largely of Leyland Victory and ERF Trailblazer single deckers, the average fleet age is 10 years, although some buses are in their twenty first year.

Demand is high

Despite the need for at least 40 new buses per year to hold operations at their present size, United Transport only managed to purchase 24 new buses between making the decision to pull out in 1986, and selling the business in 1991.

KBS has taken fleet investment to heart with 61 vehicles delivered during 1992/93, and a further 60 currently being delivered. Forty more single deckers and 20 double deckers are further along in the pipeline. Radical reconditioning keeps the rest of the fleet going.

Competition also keeps KBS on its toes. Around 3,000 private minibuses (matatus) compete on KBS routes in Nairobi, and cover areas which KBS doesn't serve or had withdrawn from. The situation in Mombassa is even tougher, with nearly 1,500 minibuses operating a demand-responsive business.

Added to that, the Kenyan Government set up its own bus services in 1986, after falling out with UTI. The Nyayo Bus Company owns some 200 buses gifted from Western countries, but the daily run out is hardly a threat to KBS, given NBC's problems with spares.

The third greatest problem for KBS, after underinvestment and competition, is the condition of the territory. Although most roads are metalled, the laybys are not, and city operation takes its toll on vehicles even though they were de-

Spare tyres!

Mr Stewart relishes the challenges and is applying old-fashioned standards of quality and service to a network backed up by the most modern management techniques available

signed for rugged work.

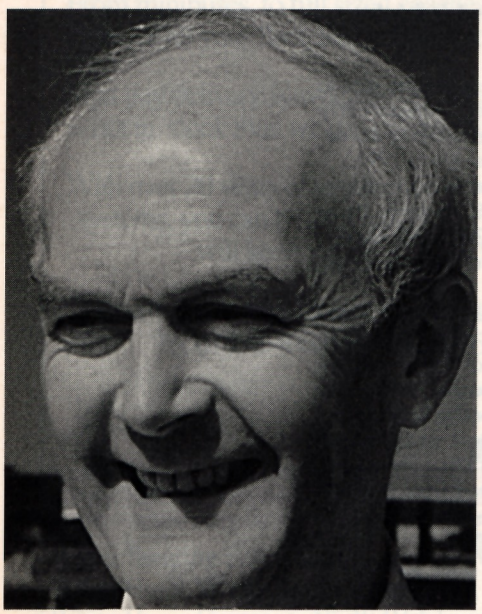
Potholes of cavernous proportions appear, especially after the two rainy seasons, and remedial action is slow. Driving standards are poor, with road accidents claiming more lives than Aids. Collisions are regular, and spectacular matatu accidents can cause at least a dozen deaths.

Road conditions put their strain on engineering facilities. In one four-weekly period, engineers can fit an average of 108 new and reconditioned springs, 270 pins and bushes, recondition eight engines and 20 gearboxes, not to mention welding 10 cracked or broken chassis.

Last but not least is the nature of the market. Predictably, demand is peaked, although the full 300-vehicle runout in Nairobi works flat out until 9 pm. Fares, however, have to be kept low to match the competition, and to meet the needs of a poor population, much of which walks to work every day.

One sees vast hordes of people undertaking walks of up to 20 miles each day, all hoping to save a few shillings.

Although passengers per day in Nairobi average some 1,400 per vehicle, the average fare is some 14p, which is the price of two cabbages. This leaves little for manoeuvre in the income v investment dilemma and requires careful financial management to implement a successful expansion programme.



Malcolm Stewart: Heading the biggest overseas operation owned by a UK-based bus company

Meeting these challenges head on is Malcolm Stewart. Formerly head of the Scottish Bus Group, since March he has led the biggest overseas operation belonging to a UK-based bus company.

He readily acknowledges the tremendous support received from the Stagecoach Group in bringing on changes and cites managing director Ann Gloag as playing a particularly active part.

He points proudly to the improvements made by Stagecoach since taking over in Kenya — new vehicles, extended engineering facilities, more staff facilities and management training programmes. Nevertheless he is the first to admit much more is needed, with action plans in progress on a variety of fronts.

National laws are vague over enforcing service regulation and preventing illegal operation. Matatu operator associations were declared illegal but it is crystal clear they exist and are often well organised.

Police action is inconclusive over traffic law violations and other crimes such as robberies. City centre traffic congestion and highway repair are not tackled sufficiently by local authorities, although occasionally a spurt of activity follows either a public outcry or a Presidential edict.

Import duties and taxation discriminate against heavy-duty vehicles, tyres and genuine spare parts that KBS must buy and, until last year, the company was not allowed to borrow on the local market to uprate investment.

Despite operating buses in an environment which could not be more different from the UK's, Mr Stewart relishes the challenges and is applying old-fashioned standards of quality and service to a network backed up by the most modern management techniques available.

Middle managers are being given thorough in-house training on a continuing basis and road staff motivation is being pumped up regularly through a mixture of constantly improved facilities and conditions of service, and regular performance reviews.

Tackling and coping with competition on a day-to-day basis is one thing but planning for an expanding population must be an ongoing goal. KBS's market intelligence is excellent and it knows on any given day virtually exactly how many competing vehicles are out on the road. It leads in route and service development, while the competition then follows with copycat routes.

Nevertheless, the company now claims an improved market share in Nairobi of 51 per cent, although the Mombasa operation still requires considerable attention.

With the improvement in operational efficiency, KBS has turned around in profitability and carried 20 per cent more passengers last year (121 million in Nairobi in 1993/94).

Plans are now in hand to introduce double deckers, the first since 1974, to cope with ever-increasing peak loads, although many buses are already licensed to carry 100 passengers or more.

Nairobi, in particular, must now look for a Western-style solution to its traffic and transportation problems before the city centre seizes up. KBS is already impressing the authorities with its all-round professionalism and stands in a good position to participate in developing plans for traffic management and perhaps rapid transit.

KBS is also diligently pursuing the twin goals of smartening up its act, and expanding its operating horizons. Malcolm Stewart confesses that, in all his years of public transport work, he has never met as exciting a challenge as the development of East-African bus operations into the twenty-first century. CBW

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Be at BTTF '95, to make sure your business benefits!

We will automatically send you your complimentary admission ticket to the show when you enter this competition. Send in your entry now!!! Send it to: Rebeka Coventry, BTTF '95 Office, Thames Tower, Black's Road, Hammersmith, London W6 9EL. Your entry must reach us by Monday 13 March and the prizewinner will be notified in writing by Monday 20 March.

WIN EVEN MORE PRIZES ... Visit BTTF on Thursday 23 March, the second day of the show, and enter the Grand Prize Draw. Here's your chance to win one of a host of these fantastic prizes, with coach operators in mind. And they are worth over £3000! Prizes include 50 tickets to one of the following: 'Miss Saigon', the Tower of London, Hampton Court, 'Cats' or to one of the Butlin's Holiday Worlds. Look out for the special entry form in the 11 March issue of Coach and Bus Week, or pick up an entry form from the Coach and Bus Week stand (stand number 251) at BTTF.

To win one of these fabulous ticket prizes, you must post your entry form at the Coach and Bus Week stand at BTTF, and then attend the Prize Draw Ceremony at 14.30 on the second day of the show.

RULES

1 The Prize Draw is open only to bona fide Coach Operators over the age of 18 years and UK residents. No purchase necessary.

2 The winner for the Short Break Draw number 1 will be drawn on 13 March and will be notified in writing by Monday 20 March.

3 The prize draw for Short Break number 1 is as specified and is subject to availability. It must be utilised by 31/10/95. Travel and spending money are not included.

4 Entries are to be made on the official form only in ink or ballpoint. No cash alternative in whole or in part for any prize, which are not transferable.

5 Judges decision is final and no correspondence entered into. All entrants deemed to have accepted rules.

6 Details of the prizewinner's name/county is obtainable by sending an SAE to: Coach Operators Weekly Prize Draw (1), BTTF '95 at the address below after 20 March.

7 Promoter: British Travel Trade Fair '95, Thames Tower, Black's Road, London W6 9EL.

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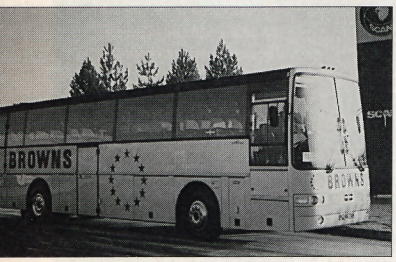
Please enter me into this free prize draw. I confirm that I am a bona fide coach operator.

Signed _____ Date _____

SCANIA

Another Scania for Browns

ERIC Brown of Brown's Coaches, Pontefract, is the owner of a new Scania K113CRB/Van Hool Alizee HE for his 10-vehicle fleet. The 49-seat coach has seatbelts on all seats, toilet, bunk, drinks machine and window-less back. It increases the number of Scanias in Brown's fleet to three and will be used on touring work throughout Great Britain and Europe.



ALEXANDER

Orders worth over £16m from Far East

Business booms as firm establishes subsidiary company, Walter Alexander Hong Kong Ltd

REPEAT orders for double-deck buses from Hong Kong and new single-deck orders from Singapore have been placed with Walter Alexander, bringing the company's order book to more than £50 million.

The orders, worth more than £16 million, from new and long-standing customers in the Far East, come as Alexander establishes a subsidiary company, Walter Alexander Hong Kong Ltd.

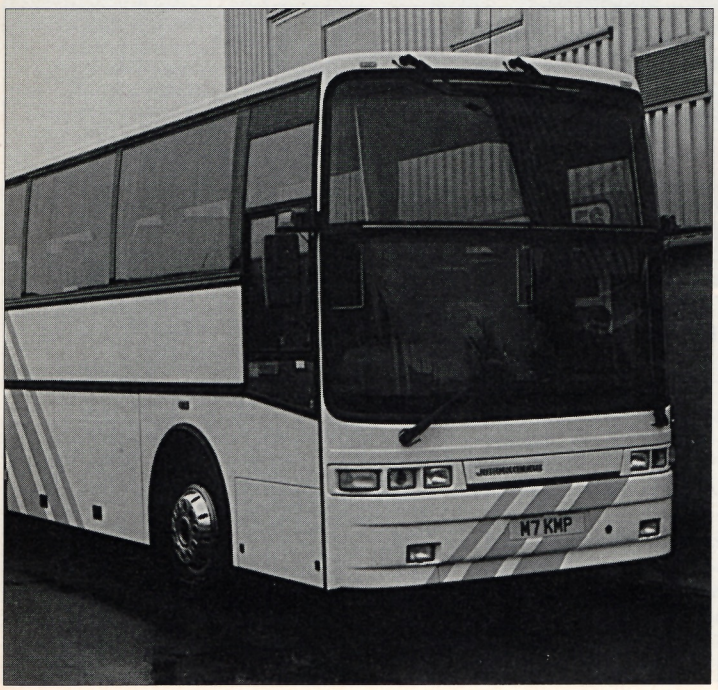
Citybus of Hong Kong is taking 40 air-conditioned double deckers; Kowloon Motor Bus is adding 80 deckers built from kits, including the first 10 Scania for Hong Kong; Singapore Bus Service has ordered 100 Strider single deckers for local build; and Trans-Island Bus Services of Singapore is taking 100 Falkirk-built single deckers.

YEATES

KMP takes delivery of Jonckheere

A VOLVO B10M-chassied Jonckhere Deauville 45L has been supplied to KMP of Llanberis in special livery for Bus Eireann contract by dealer Yeates Bus & Coach.

It has automatic gearbox, 51/53 reclining seats, radio, PA/cassette, toilet and Continental door.



YEATES

Fleet expands with Volvos

CLARKES of Lower Sydenham, London, has added two Volvo B12T double deckers to its fleet. The pair have Jonckheere Monaco 71-seat bodywork and were supplied by Yeates Bus & Coach. They have a twin courier seat, double-glazing, toilet, fridge, hot water boiler and Voith retarder.

SJ CARLTON

Shaw gets Carlton Skyliner

HARRY Shaw's 1995 vehicle intake includes a 77-seat Neoplan Skyliner double-deck coach from SJ Carlton of Hellaby, Rotherham.

A graduated orange livery in the same style as some of last season's new coaches has been applied by the Neoplan agent.

The Skyliner is powered by Mercedes-Benz V8 380bhp engine linked to eight-speed ZF manual gearbox. A Telma retarder is fitted.

DAWSONRENTALS

Park and ride grows by the year

Bedford Park and Ride started six years ago as a Christmas only special. It has gone from strength to strength

By Mike Morgan

WHEN Bedford Borough Council started Park and Ride in early 1989 it was an initiative from the councillors prompted by the loss of a large town centre car park to redevelopment, as well as a desire to reduce traffic levels.

It was not long before a single route had grown to the present five, four of which are currently operated by Mullovers from their new Bedford base, and the other by Buffalo Travel of Flitwick, Bedfordshire.

Working a 10-minute turnaround from 8am to 6pm, all but one are market-day specials, which means Wednesdays and Saturdays. Mullovers has the one six-day-a-week service. Fares have been pitched at 20p per journey, per person, with children under 15 free, and free parking, making it more economical than to use one of the central car parks.

Contracts specify 22-seat vehicles and Mullovers acquired two Mercedes-Benz midibuses of 23 and 24 seats, respectively, on three-year contract leases through Dawsonrentals.

"We wanted quality, reliable vehicles with 24-hour back-up, which we could integrate into our private hire business as well as using for the Park and Ride," said Mrs McKenna, who has run the firm since 1967.

■ DAWSONRENTALS now has 36 branches. Tim Moore is manager of the latest depot at Scudamore Road, Leicester.

Michael Williams, Dawsongroup chief executive, said: "A high proportion of our customers are looking to short-term rental or contract/lease options as an integral part of their fleet management and we are expanding our branch network to meet their demands."

Dennis Sandell, director of Dawsonrentals Coach and Bus Division, is based at the group's Milton Keynes head office.

KIRKBY

Nat Ex spec for Dennis Javelin

ROGER Hill Coaches of Congleton has taken a Dennis Javelin GX/Plaxton Premiere 350 converted from stock to National Express specification by Kirkby Coach & Bus. It has rear saloon toilet, Telma retarder, destination gear, and National Express vinyls.

KIRKBY

Looking good at Bassetts

SUBTLE changes to Bassetts Coachways' livery surfaced on the company's new Plaxton Javelin, delivered by Kirkby Coach and Bus. Gone is the Tittensor-based company's traditional two-tone grey and blue layout, replaced by diagonal banding using the same colours and a red pinstripe border. The coach is 25-vehicle Bassett's tenth Javelin. CBW

SJ CARTLON

Anniversary celebrated with new coaches for Smith

THIRSK-based operator John Smith & Sons is celebrating its 60th year of operation with two new Neoplan Transliner coaches finished in traditional livery but with special '60 years' laurel wreath logo on front and rear.

The vehicles are the two 3.6-metre prototype coaches demonstrated at last year's ExpoCoach. They have 48 reclining seats, courier seat, offside rear sunken toilet, Continental door, driver bunk, TV/video, central locking, water boiler, fridge and Tempo 100.

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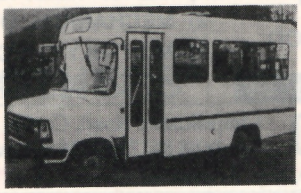

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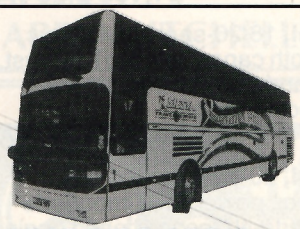

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53/48 Recliners & 2 crew – Economical DAF TURBO 354, SERVICED/MAINTAINED BY DAF (U.K.) FROM NEW, VERY HIGH SPECIFICATION INCL. TEMPO 100, SPEED LIMITER, DRIVERS BUNK, CENTRE TOILET/WASHROOM & SERVERY (HOT/COLD), FRIDGE, WEBASTO, DOUBLE GLAZED, TINTED, FULL-DRAW CURTAINS, VIDEO/T.V.'s etc, etc
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Siesta International Holidays, **01642 227711**
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VOLVO

1989 VOLVO B10M T, MkIII
65/67 armchair seats, Plaxton 4000, TV, video, stereo, toilet, tables, cup holders, glove nets, double glazing, sun blinds, curtains, carpets, all rubber floor, Klix drinks and fridge, air extractors, 3 crew seats and bunk, very large luggage lockers.
Maintained regardless of cost, owned from new, exceptional condition, long MoT.
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1988 F REG VAN HOOL ALIZEE SUPER HIGH VOLVO B10M
Executive coach, 49 recliners, centre sunken toilet, water boiler, fridge, carpeted, radio cassette, double glazed, Webasto, driver's bunk, no rear window, owned by us from new. Tested till December '95.
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53R, tints, double glazed, Telma, exhaust brake, autolube, power door, October test
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1983 VOLVO B10M Van Hool Alizee, white, 51 recliners, rear toilet, fridge, MoT and taxed July, good condition, **£33,000 + VAT ono. Tel. 071-580 6600.**
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1989 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500
51/53 recliners, toilet, d/glazed windows, MoT Nov '95, wired TV/video, very clean vehicle.
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28 seater minicoach, good condition, MoT'd (new MoT if required)
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VOLVO B10M - Plaxton 3200 - Choice of two - 1985 - 57 seater - Retrimmed & Pannier Lockers - Owned from new - MoT November '95 .....**£42,500 + VAT**

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1982 LEYLAND LEOPARD, good condition, 51 E type seats, ready for work – **£10,750**
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VOLVOS

1988 E VOLVO B9M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, 38 reclining seats, rear nearside toilet, blinds, aircraft lockers, radio P/A.....**£62,500**

1988 E VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, new retrimmed, 57 fixed seats, pannier lockers, POD, radio/PA, low mileage **£58,500**

1988 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, 53 reclining seats, courier seat, pannier lockers, POD, radio/PA, low mileage **£58,500**

1986 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, low driver, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, centre demount sunken toilet, double glazed, air cond, drinks machine, aircraft lockers, PA.....**£58,500**

1985 Sept C VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 53 reclining retrimmed seats, plus courier, double glazing, Webasto, curtains, provision for centre toilet/continental door, repainted white, exceptional.....**£55,000**

1983 PP VOLVO B10M BERKHOF EVEREST, 49 retrimmed Vogel seats, courier, rear sunken toilet, bunks, drinks, Telma, splitter, radio/PA/TV, video, mint, must be seen **£32,500**

1981 VOLVO B58 DUPLE DOMINANT IV, 57 seater, double glazing, POD, radio/PA, new test.....**£12,000**

1981 VOLVO B10M DUPLE DOMINANT IV, 50 reclining seats, d/glazed, Telma, POD, radio/PA.....**£16,500**

1980 VOLVO B58 VAN HOOL ALIZEE, 52 seater, radio/PA, POD, immaculate **£18,000**

OTHERS

1991 H MERCEDES 814D REEVE BURGESS BEEVER, 33 seats, power door, boot, racks, radio P/A, new test.....**£36,000**

1990 KASSBOHRER SETRA 215HD, Mercedes V8, 49 reclining seats, courier, retarder, bunk, boiler, fridge, TV, video.....**£88,500**

1988 LEYLAND TIGER CUMMINS L10 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 44 reclining seats, courier seat, rear sunken toilet, servery including fridge, boiler, optics, wardrobe, wired for TV/video, curtains, d/glazed, manual with Telma, mint**£52,500**

1987 E VAN HOOL ASTROMEGA MAN 360 TURBO, 73 reclining seats plus 2 crew, toilet, servery, coffee machine, retarder.....**£70,000**

1987 VW OPTARE CITYPACER, 25 low back coach seats, POD, long test, tidy.....**£6,000**

1986 PP NEOPLAN PLAXTON 4000 DOUBLE DECKER, 71 retrimmed reclining seats, courier seat, servery, toilet, Cummins 350 BHP engine, new ZF auto transmission, repanelled and repainted white.....**£47,500**

1983 LEYLAND TIGER DUPLE CARIBBEAN, 49 reclining seats, semi auto, rear toilet, hydracyclic gearbox, PA.....**£17,500**

1979 AEC 760 DUPLE DOMINANT EXPRESS, semi-auto, 53 seater, good for year **£3,500**

1979 LEYLAND NATIONAL, single entrance door, 42 seats plus standing, exceptional **£7,000**

1978 BEDFORD YMT SUPREME EXPRESS, 53 retrimmed seats, POD, Aug test, good clean vehicle.....**£4,500**

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1992 RENAULT MASTER DIESEL, 15 high back moquette luxury seats, sink unit, hot water, air conditioning, tv/video.
1992 RENAULT MASTER, 8 high back moquette luxury seats with arm rests, built to high specification and including two tables, fridge, microwave, air conditioning, Sony tv, sound system, compact disc, curtains, port hole side windows, sink unit, hot water.
1991 DAF SB2300 DHS, DUPLE 340, 55 reclining seats and continental door, spare pair passenger seats to make up to 57. An extremely clean and tidy vehicle, complete with power door, available immediately.
1991 RENAULT MASTER DIESEL, 16 high back moquette luxury seats, tv, video, 6 track CD player, carrier air conditioning, alarm system, 1 table, curtains, radio/pa system.
1988 BOVA FUTURA FHD, 49 reclining seats and courier seat, centre sunken toilet, continental door, water boiler, wiring for video, choice of three (one remaining).
1988 VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE JUBILEE P599, 51 reclining seats and courier seat, toilet, water boiler, choice of three exceptional vehicles, immediate delivery.
1987 VOLVO B10 BERKHOF ESPRIT, 49 reclining seats and courier seat, toilet, water boiler, continental door, excellent condition, available one week, long MoT.
1987 VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE JUBILEE P599, 48 reclining seats and courier seat, toilet and water boiler.
1987 LAG PANORAMIC, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, centre sunken toilet, continental door and air conditioning. New MoT. Choice of 2.
1987 TOYOTA OPTIMO, 19 luxury coach seats, can be supplied with new MoT, available immediately.
1986 LEYLAND TIGER, automatic transmission, Duple 340, 49 reclining seats, rear offside sunken toilet, continental door, very special price.
1983 LEYLAND TIGER 245, PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 49 reclining seats and courier seat, toilet, continental door, clean and tidy machine, available immediately.
1983 WARD 12 METRE CHASSIS, PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, 57 seater, one owner from new, very special price.
1982 BEDFORD YNT DUPLE DOM IV, 53 seats, clean and tidy.
1980 VOLVO B58 PLAXTON VIEWMASTER, band bus, including 14 bunk beds, servery unit including microwave and work area, toilet and wash basin. Front section includes 8 seats, settee and two tables, available immediately.
1979 LEYLAND LEOPARD 10 METRE, Pneumocyclic, Plaxton Supreme, 45 seats with recent re-trim and including power door.
1979 'T' BEDFORD YMT DUPLE DOMINANT I, 53 seats, interior autumn tint, curtains, power door, very clean and tidy, MoT 29 March '95.
1977 'S' BEDFORD YMT DUPLE DOMINANT I, 53 seats, very clean and tidy, ready to work, MoT May '95.
1976 'R' BEDFORD YLQ, PLAXTON SUPREME 3, 45 seater, red interior, white exterior with red stripe, a very clean coach for its year. MoT 23 October '95.

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✶ **1 x 1987 Scania K112/Jonckheere P.50** - 57 recliners, Radio/PA, Telma, double glazed, Courier seat.

✶ **2 x 1988 Volvo/Van Hool Aliz** ~~SOLD~~ ecliners, demountable toilet, TV/Video, Radio/PA.

✶ **1 x 1988 Daf MB230 Van Hool Alizee** - 46 recliners, 9 tables, TV/Video (4 monitors) Radio/PA, large rear mounted kitchen, microwave, fridge, water boiler, cupboards, centre toilet, carpets throughout, double glazing, Webasto heater and timer.

✶ **1 x 1990 Daf 2300SB/Caetano Algarve** - 49 recliners, toilet, drinks machine, TV/Video, double glazing.

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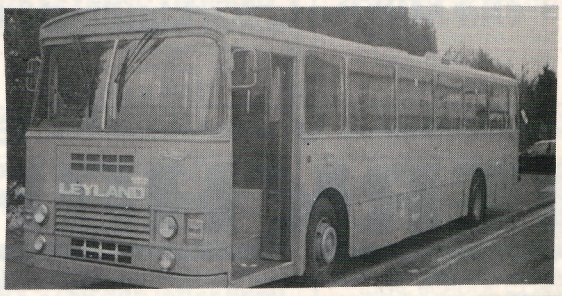
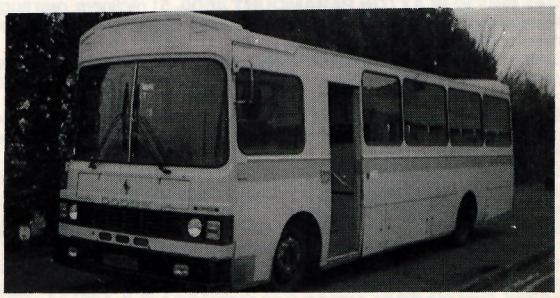
EX MoD BEDFORD, 24 seats, Wadham Stringer body, power door, 330 diesel, 5 speed unregistered, suitable for class 5 use.....**£2,850**

1984 LEYLAND TIGER
chassis, Marshall body, 54 seats, ex MoD, very little use, new tyres, TL II engine, 6 speed box, power wide door, PSV MoT Jan'96.
ANOTHER AVAILABLE WITH CLASS 5 OR PSV



1985 EX MoD DODGE
chassis, 39 seats, Wadham Stringer body, power door, unregistered.
SUITABLE PSV OR CLASS 5.
CHOICE OF 3.



1982 EX MoD LEYLAND LEOPARD
chassis, 54 seater Wadham Stringer bodies, Leyland 680 engine, 6 speed, unregistered.
TWO, CLASS 5 OR PSV AS REQ.

EASTWOODS COMMERCIAL MOTORS LTD
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1988 E TALBOT EXPRESS 2.5, side door, radio, white exterior MoT Dec '94.

1987 D FREIGHT ROVER 2.5, 15 seat, luxury mini-coach, MoT October '95.

1987 D/E TALBOT 2.5 TRI-AXLE, 20 seats, power door, destination gear, choice of 7,various MoT dates.

1986 C FORD TRANSIT 2.5 DI, 16 seats, 5 standees, power door. various MoT's dates, choice of 6.

1985 PP LEYLAND TIGER PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 49 seats, rear toilet, semi auto, MoT Nov'95.

1985 B LEYLAND TIGER 245 DUPLE CARRIBEAN II, 46 seats, toilet, power door, new MoT.

1984 B LEYLAND TIGER 245 DUPLE LASER II 57 seats, power door, MoT Aug '95.

1984 A LEYLAND TIGER 245 PLAXTON PARA-MOUNT 3500, 50 seats, toilet, power door, new MoT.

1981 (W) BEDFORD YMT 500 DUPLE DOMINANT II 53 seats, power door.

1980 (V) BEDFORD YMT DUPLE DOMINANT II 53 seats, power door, all white exterior, MoT April 95.

Old Mill Park, Kirkintilloch, Glasgow G66 1SP. Fax: 041-777 8138

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A — V — E

BERKHOF

1990 LEYLAND DAF 400, High Roof, 16 seats, cloth trim, interior grey, exterior red, MoT 22/3/96

1989 (F) DAF MB230 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 51 recliners, rear sunken toilet, continental door, power door, radio/tape/PA, tinted windows, curtains, interior grey/red, exterior cream/red/brown, MoT 29/11/95

1989 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 49 reclining seats, crew seat, centre sunken toilet, side window blinds, aircraft style rack locker doors, interior fawn/brown, exterior white, no signwriting, MoT 29/3/96

1988 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZÉE, 53 reclining seats, crew seat, double glazing, side window blinds, Telma retarder, radio/tape, fawn/brown interior, exterior metallic blue/white/gold, MoT 12/12/95

1988 VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE P50, 51 recliners, crew seat, double glazing, rear continental door, sunken toilet, radio/PA/tape & video wiring, interior fawn/brown, exterior white/mid & dark blue, MoT 15/3/96. **£74,500.00**

1988 (E) DAF MB230 DKFL CAETANO ALGARVE, 51 recliners, sunken toilet, rear continental door, crew seat, power door, peage window, radio/tape, drinks machine, tinted windows, ferry lift and kneeling suspension, wired for video, interior grey/red, exterior white unsignwritten, MoT 15/5/95

1983 (PP) LEYLAND TIGER PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, 53 seats, power door, radio/tape, grey/red moquette, formica side panels, exterior white/blue/red

1978 BRISTOL LHS PLAXTON SUPREME, 35 retrimmed seats, radio/tape, power door, red curtains, grey/red/orange moquette, grey/fawn floor, power steering, exterior cream/red/maroon, MoT 31/1/96

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1988 VOLVO B10M PARAMOUNT 3500, 49/53 exec, aircraft style luggage racks, blinds, wired tv & video, finished in white.

1988 SCANIA K112 PARAMOUNT 3500, 51 seater exec, curtains, tv & video, coffee machine, Telma, double glazing, finished in white.

1989 MERCEDES 609, 24 seater, power door.

1986 MERCEDES 608 PLAXTON MINI SUPREME.

1983 TIGER 245 ZF, PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 49 str exec.

1988 MERCEDES 507 WELFARE BUS.

1980 MERCEDES 508, 19 str.

1988 TALBOT EXPRESS, 14 str.

1984 IVECO, 14 str.

1979 VOLVO B58, 57 str, Plaxton Supreme, pp, power door.

1976 BEDFORD, 45 str, power door.

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1992 (June) KASSBOHRER SETRA S215 HD 'Tornado', 49 recliners, centre sunken toilet, courier seat, retarder, bunk, hot water boiler, refrigerator, video/tv/pa/cassette, Webasto, all white, MoT 8 Dec '95.....**£123,000**

1991 (April) KASSBOHRER SETRA S215 HD 'Tornado', 49 recliners, centre sunken toilet, courier seat, retarder, bunk, hot water boiler, refrigerator, video/tv/pa/cassette, Webasto, recent recon engine, all white, MoT 30 Sept '95 .....**£112,000**

1988 (April) VOLVO B10M Jonckheere Jubilee, 49 recliners, centre sunken toilet, courier seat, retarder, bunk, coffee machine, refrigerator, video/tv/pa/cassette, exterior blue, MoT 23 Mar '95 (will MoT and respray white if required) **£64,750**

1985 (June) MERCEDES 0303 Jonckheere P50, 51 recliners, centre sunken toilet, courier seat, retarder, bunk, coffee machine, refrigerator, video/tv/pa/cassette, all white, MoT 13 Feb '96.....**£43,000**

1983 (April) MERCEDES 0303, 53 seats, courier seat, air-conditioned, radio/pa/cassette, Webasto, exterior blue, MoT 11 Aug '95 (can respray white if required) **£27,750**

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2 Litre Petrol, 16 high back seats, new clutch and gearbox, only 2 weeks old, white exterior, red interior, will make excellent school contract vehicle.

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1989 MAN Jonckheere Deauville, 49 recliners, double glazed, coffee/fridge, video, toilet, Telma .....**£77,500 + VAT**

1989 MAN Jonckheere Deauville, 51 recliners, double glazed, coffee/fridge, video, toilet. Choice of 3 .....**£82,500 + VAT**

1982 K Reg VW Transporter Caravelle, 7 seater diesel mini bus. Superb condition **£9,500**

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All Mercedes 2 years warranty or 200,000 kilometres

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NEW MERCEDES 709, coachbuilt, 29 + 7 standees, p/d, dip tac, **STOCK.**

NEW MERCEDES 811, diesel, extended coachbuilt, 33 service or semi coach seats, standees, DipTac, wide passage, auto, Allison or manual, **STOCK.**

NEW MERCEDES 814 diesel, extended coach built, luxury coach spec, power swivel door, large boot, racks, **STOCK.**

NEW MERCEDES 711 Turbo, 24 lux, boot, power swivel door, **STOCK.**

NEW MERCEDES 609D, 24 seats, full spec, boot, power door, lug rack, radio cassette, Also 26 manual door, **STOCK.**

NEW MERCEDES 410, 16 high back face forward seats, **STOCK.**

NEW MERCEDES 709, 29 coach seats, boot, **STOCK.**

NEW TRANSIT 16, high roof, face forward seats, coach spec, **EARLY.**
NEW TRANSIT, 15 diesel psv, **7 DAYS.**
NEW TRANSIT 14, diesel, psv, **STOCK.**

NEW TRANSIT, diesel, 8 seat Taxibus wheelchair, **STOCK.**

NEW DAF SERVICE BUS, 20 + 3 standees, also welfare

NEW DAF 16/20, p/door, tail lift. **STOCK.**
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NEW TRANSIT 15/5 w/chairs and t/lift.
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NEW MERC 609 24/6 w/chairs and t/lift.
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94 M LEYLAND DAF, 16, low roof, power steering
94 TRANSIT, 16, high roof, psv

90 VOLVO PLAXTON 3500 EXEC, tested.

90 MERCEDES 709, 25 coach, p/door.
90 MERCEDES 408, 16, coach spec, FF
90 TRANSIT, diesel auto 15 PSV, low mileage
89 MERCEDES 609, coach spec, 23 seats.

89 CHARISMA 0303 MERC 49 exec.

89 CITROEN 14, diesel, PSV
89 MAZDA DIESEL, 14 seat, PSV tested.
89 FREIGHT ROVER 16, high roof
89 MERCEDES 208, 12 seat, diesel.
88 MERCEDES 609, p/door, 21 seats.

88 TALBOT TRIAXLE, 13+ 2 wheelchairs and lift

88 VOLVO B10 DUPLE 320, 57 seats

88 TOYOTA OPTIMO, 16/21 seats.
88 MERC 23, coach spec.
88 MERCEDES 814, 29 seat, p/door & boot.
88 TRANSIT, 12, diesel, psv, swb.
88 MERC 609, coach spec, 23 seats.
88 TRANSIT, diesel, 11 psv, swb.
88 RENAULT DODGE, 25 service bus, auto.
88 MERCEDES 609, 24 coach, boot.
88 TRANSIT, petrol, 12 seats.
88 MERCEDES 609, 23 coach, boot.
88 F MERCEDES 709, 21 seat, coach spec.
87 MERC 814 (6 Cylinder), 28 seats, PMT body, p/door, coach spec.
87 TALBOT 14, diesel psv, no test, £1,500.
87 RENAULT DODGE, Man, service, Alexander 23.
86 IVECO, service, 19 + standees.
86 RENAULT DODGE, service bus auto, 25.
86 IVECO, 19 service bus tested.

86 SETRA DOUBLE DECK EXEC, new test

86 LEYLAND CUB, 33 + standees, service bus, auto + Telma

85 C SETRA EXEC, testing, 49 or 53, toilet.

84 DAF JONCKHEERE, 49, toilet, exec

84 VOLVO IRIZA, 49, toilet, exec, retrimmed

83 DODGE R BURGESS, diesel, auto, 17F door.

83 VOLVO JONK, 57 seat, P90. NEW TEST.

82 LEYLAND VIEWMASTER, 49, + toilet, exec

82 BEDFORD 35, Plaxton 500 engine.
82 DENNIS PERKINS, auto, Alexander service bus, 50 + standees.
82 BEDFORD PLAXTON 29, p.door.
81 BEDFORD, 53 Duple testing.
80 FORD, 35 seat Duple II.
79 V VOLVO DUPLE II, 50 rec, toilet, tested.
79 FORD, 35 seat, Duple II.
79 FORD, 31 seat, Duple II.
78 LEYLAND LEOPARD EXPRESS, 53 seats.
78 SEDDON GARDNER ALEXANDER, manual box.
77 VOLVO PLAXTON, 53, 8 speed, new test.

MERC DIESEL, 4 berth Motorhome, delivery mileage only, elevating roof.

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1983 JONCKHEERE BERMUDA, DAF SB2005, 52 reclining seats + courier, Telma, MoT May '95. **£16,500 + VAT. Tel: 0117 986 3080 (Bristol).** (54805/VSG)

1984 VOLVO B10 JONCKHEERE P90

Exec spec, 57 seats, P.P. New MoT.

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Under £5000

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FORD TRANSIT MINIBUSES
16 seat + 5 standees, all C reg, all with full MoT's, not usual rubbish!
From £2,750 + VAT
Part exchange possible
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MERCEDES 1981
12 seats, **£1,500**
01244 543288
(54762/VU5)

1987 FREIGHT ROVER 300 Series
2500cc diesel, coach built, 16 seater, power door, PCV 1996, taxed.
£3,995
01626 334959
(54751/VU5)

1976 LEYLAND LEOPARD WILLOWBROOK SERVICE BUS
51 seats + standees, semi auto, power steering, MoT Aug '95.
£3,250 + VAT
Tel: 0204 668112 (Lancs)
(54752/VU5)

1977 BEDFORD YLQ
500 engine, Supreme front, 45 seater, 1 owner, re-panelled, 4 months tax and test, excellent condition.
£3,250 + VAT
Tel: 0191 3734 200 or 0191 3789 845 (after 6pm)
(54585/VU5)

1972 AEC
49 seater, excellent body, seats good.
£1,000 ovno + VAT
TEL: 01358 743425
(54755/VU5)

BEDFORD PJK 29
1982, Plaxton, very clean and tidy, long test
£4,995 + VAT
Tel. 0141 221 3165
(Blythswood)
(54758/VU5)

BEDFORD
17 seats, Plaxton Mini Supreme, 1979, clean & tidy.
£2,750
01244 543288
(54759/VU5)

FREIGHT ROVER 350
C Reg, 16 seater, Carlyle bus, 2.5L diesel, MoT Oct 1995, reliable, good runner, in use, surplus March 1995
£1,750 or reasonable offer
Tel. 0121 770 3353
(54774/VU5)

RENAULT TRAFIC
12 seat mini bus, F reg, used daily
£3,495
01495 753088
(54649/VU5)

1975 BEDFORD PJK
29 seater, PSV till June '95, taxed till July '95, very tidy interior, bodywork requires some attention.
£1,950 ovno + VAT
Tel: 01772 783723
(54562/VU5)

83 (Y) BEDFORD PJK PLAXTON SUPREME IV
68,000 miles from new, fitted with side wheel chair lift.
£3,500 p/x considered
Tel: 01982 570225 or 01597 824322
(54590/VU5)

1976 YMT PLAXTON SUPREME
Test 'til May, taxed
£2,800 ono + VAT
Tel. 01694 724322/502
(Shropshire)
(54712/VU5)

BEDFORD DOMINANT
1979, 45 seats, excellent condition
£4,500
01244 543288
(54760/VU5)

TALBOT EXPRESS
17 seater, service vehicle, first reg 1.8.88, MoT Feb '96.
£3,850 + VAT
Tel: 051 424 5972
(54800/VU5)

MERCEDES 407D
B reg, 15 seater, new seats with seat belts, taxed, MoT Dec '95.
£4,000 plus VAT
0384 564751
IDEAL SCHOOL CONTRACT
(54799/VU5)

TRANSIT 2.5 DI
15 seats, one owner from new. MoT & Tax end Sept. Exhaust, battery, cam belt replaced. Well above average, hence
£4,800 + VAT
Tel. 01352 755725
(54596/VU5)

LEYLAND LEOPARD SERVICE BUS
1976, Plaxton Derwent body, 55 seats, power steering, semi-auto, new MoT, very clean and tidy for age, repainted cream, p/exchange considered
£5,000 +VAT
Tel. 01782 563563
(Staffs)
(54682/VU5)

FREIGHT ROVER
D Reg, 20 seats, MoT & tax, fitted with seat belts.
£2,850 + VAT ono
Tel: 0131 449 5860 or 458 3376 (54574/VU5)

BEDFORD CF
12 seater minibus, 1983, excellent condition, new 12 months MoT, must be seen
£1,275 + VAT
Tel. 01269 844399
(54784/VU5)

BRISTOL LH6L
39 seater, London Transport specification, automatic gearbox, 7'6" wide, tested January 1996, excellent condition throughout, some spares available.
£8,250
Tel: 01747 854359/0831 539758
(54578/VU5)

FORD PLAXTON SUPREME V
1982, 49 seater, very good condition, taxed, MoT'd
£5,000 + VAT
Tel. 01253 824983
(54770/VU5)

Under £5000

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LEYLAND LEOPARD S/A ALEXANDER BUS
57 seats, recent recon gearbox & engine, taxed & MoT, in daily use
£4,250 + VAT
PX possible for later coach
Tel. 0245 320598 (Essex)
(54580/VU5)

N Reg, BRISTOL LHS
45 seater, Plaxton coach, POD, tax, MoT.
£2,200
Tel: 01209 717152
(54643/VU5)

1982 MERCEDES 508
19 highback seats, luggage racks, wheel trims, radio cassette, good runner, MoT April
BARGAIN £2,500 ono + VAT
Tel. 0274 873097
(West Yorks)
(54582/VU5)

1980 FORD
53 seater coach, engine rebuilt 7/94, new test, taxed, vgc.
£4,750 ono
Tel: 010 353 68 21707 (Ireland)
(54558/VU5)

TRANSIT DIESEL
16 seats, C reg, clean, destination blinds
£3,250
0244 543288
(54761/VU5)

1975 BEDFORD YRT PLAXTON ELITE III
53 seater, power doors, 500 engine fitted with Paramount front, MoT October '95, in daily use.
£2,500 + VAT
0409 221661 (Garage)
0409 221435 (Home)
Peter (54644/VU5)

D REG
FREIGHT ROVER 350 DIESEL
White, 20 seater, POD, vgc, MoT August '95.
£3,200 + VAT
Tel. 01297 32449
(54797/VU5)

1978 MERCEDES
45 seats.....**£4,000**
Tel: 0191 386 2503
(54566/VU5)

1988 FORD MINIBUS
14 seats, new shape, petrol, superb condition, just certified and tested for 12 months
£3,800
Tel: (01977) 612219
Eves: (01977) 615510
(54361/VU5)

BEDFORD YMT DUPLE
1979, 13 months test, good condition
£4,000 + VAT or nearest offer
Tel. 01694 724322/502
(Shropshire)
(54711/VU5)

1986
FIAT CAETANO
24 seater, recon engine, usual refinements, front accident damage, hence the price
£3,000 + VAT
Tel. 0274 873097
(54581/VU5)

FLEETLINE DMS
1977, tested 9/6/95, 70 seats, Gardner, good condition
£5,000 ono
METROBUS 01689 861432
and speak to Peter Larking
(54563/VU5)

1982 MERC, 1981 MERC
Both 19 seaters, both taxed and tested, both with roof racks and boot, good condition
£3,100 and £2,500
respectively or nearest offer + VAT
Tel. 01694 724322 (Shropshire)
(54710/VU5)

BRISTOL VR
1977, S reg, 70 seats, MoT May '95, Gardner engine.
£4,500 + VAT
Tel. 01705 580522
(54718/VU5)

FREIGHT ROVER MkII
Carlyle, 20 seats, good condition, MoT, taxed, new clutch and g/box, immaculate interiors
£4,500 plus VAT
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(54554/VU5)

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1976, 47 seats, power door, Bristol dome, MoT 6/95, above average condition, not the usual tired example
Bargain at £2,995 + VAT
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(54683/VU5)

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51 seater Plaxton, coach, taxed, long MoT, POD, clean, in daily use.
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(54642/VU5)

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1987, D Reg, 18 seats, No MoT, non-runner
£1,500 ono + VAT
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(54720/VU5)

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FORD
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Willowbrook DP
49 seats plus standees, semi auto, tested 16/1/96
£4,950 ono + VAT
0161 620 8600 (50043/VU5)

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W reg, 35 seats S/B, test Aug '95
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(54728/VU5)

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Express doors, 500 engine, 53 seater, MoT Dec '95, in daily use.
£4,500 + VAT
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0409 221435 (Home)
(Ask for Peter) (54646/VU5)

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Express doors, 1978 T reg, MoT May '95, Taxed April '95
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(54719/VU5)

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LEYLAND 690
8 months MoT, engine requires attention.
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01707 268012
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(54561/VU5)

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1983, diesel, 12 seater, white
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(54474/VU5)

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(54648/VU5)

SEDDON PENNINE
T reg, 49 seats D/P, test April '95
£3,250 ono + VAT
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(54729/VU5)

BEDFORD YRQ
1973, W Reg, POD, 37 recliners, 5 tables, MoT 6/95
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Twelve seater, tested October 1995, good condition, many new parts, good tyres, good school contract vehicle.
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(54556/VU5)

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53 seater on a 10m length, MoT Dec '95
£1,950 ono
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01752 788491 (eves)
(54723/VU5)

1986 D REG
FREIGHT ROVER 350 DIESEL,
16 highback moquette seats + 4 standees, 12 months CoF, taxed, white, vgc,
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47 seats, express doors, Bristol Dome, cab door, semi auto, power steering, new MoT.
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(54595/VU5)

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20 seater Carlyle service bus, resprayed white, fitted with Ford engine and gearbox
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53 contracts till July, private hire, all included, owner retiring, MoT June, tidy.
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01442 244943 WATFORD AREA
(54584/VU5)

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16 Seater Diesel, 'D' Reg, new MoT, Taxed, High Back Seats,
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45 seats, **£4,000.**
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(54568/VU5)

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53 seater, P.O.D., MoT 10-11-95.
£3,000 + VAT ono
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(54765/VU5)

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Carlyle, 18 seater service bus.
£2,500
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(54679/VU5)

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53 remoquetted seats, MoT Sept '95
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T Reg
BEDFORD
Dominant II, 53 seats, good condition, MoT till May and taxed.
£2,750 + VAT ono
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(54576/VU5)

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Doesn't smoke or drink. Will go anywhere, MoT August '95.
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0438 833089
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FREIGHT ROVER
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£4,750
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1984, B reg, TALBOT EXPRESS
12 seater minibus, taxed and tested, 1921cc, petrol, 5 speed gearbox.
£795
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£3,400 + VAT
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(54706/VU5)

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16 seater service bus, 1985, MoT and Taxed. Choice of 2. Both in daily use.
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45S, 500cc engine, tested till 9 Oct 1995, very tidy coach.
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(54767/VU5)

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£4,950 ono + VAT
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(54730/VU5)

FORD TRANSIT
C Reg, 12 seater, 2.5 Diesel, tested Jan '96, taxed Aug, good condition, lap belts, low mileage.
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(54579/VU5)

1977 BEDFORD YMT 53s
Plaxton, MoT June '95. In daily use.
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31 seater, 9 standees, full service spec, full auto Allison box, good condition throughout, June '95 test.
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(54557/VU5)

F Reg
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PSV, 17 seater, Oct '95 test, excellent condition
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(54598/VU5)

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25 seater, very clean, reliable, power door, new tyres, Oct MoT, taxed end March
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BEDFORD
1976, 45, excellent interior, good body, engine requires attention
£1,000 ono + VAT
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16 seater, taxed, MoT April. Can retest, clean, reliable, power door, new tyres.
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53 seater (retrimmed), new brakes, front tyres, very reliable contract vehicle.
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57 seats, MoT'd, excellent body, Mk VI front.
£2,500 ono + VAT
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15 seat mini bus, Holdsworth Hi-top
£3,995
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57 seats, MoT September '95, good contract vehicle.
£4,750 + VAT
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(54756/VU5)

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1981, 53 recliners, PA, MoT Oct '95
£4,500 + VAT ono
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(Goole)
(54575/VU5)

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53 seater, taxed, tested, good body, many new panels, seating fair, new brake drums, shoes.
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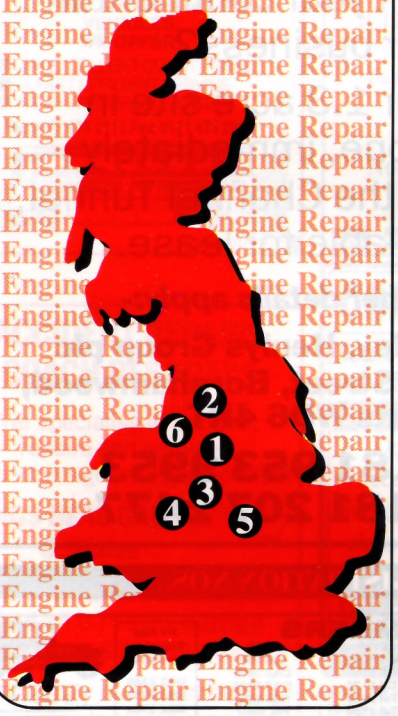

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▼ Coach

Former WA md now at David Urquhart Travel

by Mike Morgan

FORMER Wallace Arnold md John King moves to David Urquhart Travel — six months after leaving his previous post in the first round of last year's top-level shake-ups at the Leeds-based coach holiday giant.

Mr King joins the David Urquhart Travel board this week as director of development.

His task, according to the man who founded the company in 1983, md David Urquhart, is to maintain and improve tour programmes out of Scotland and Yorkshire.

Mr Urquhart claims his £20 million turnover company is currently Britain's biggest privately-owned coach tour operator.

Company growth was spectacular during its first six to seven years but there has been intense competition from other operators, including Mr King's former company, Wallace Arnold.

Mr King is expected to help David Urquhart Travel expand its programme in the north of England — Wallace Arnold's heartland.

Mr Urquhart said there were limits to development potential in its home territory, Scotland.

On peak Saturdays the company uses up to 200 coaches but 70 per cent of that business is generated north of the border.

All coach movements are sub-contracted.

Mr Urquhart says this allows the company to respond to the market without having the overheads of vehicle ownership.

David Urquhart welcomes John King (left)

▼ Consultancy

Lawson joins TPS

THE former head of Norwich Union's travel department has joined Travellers Protection Services as senior travel consultant.

Chris Lawson brings 35 years of experience with the Norwich giant, the last 15 of which were gained in its £15 million per annum holiday and travel insurance operation.

Mr Lawson started with Norwich Union when insurance for two weeks in Europe cost just 50p and rose to head the travel department before leaving last year.

Travellers Protection Services has welcomed Mr Lawson to its Norwich head office and is confident his unrivalled experience and expertise in the field of travel insurance will reinforce TPS's position as a leading supplier of insurance services to the coach industry.

▼ Coach and bus

Campbell is coming to GRT Group

WILLIAM Campbell joins the GRT Group later this month as operations director responsible for Midland Bluebird, SMT and Lowland. This move completes the revised management team in Edinburgh.

Mr Campbell, 38, joins SMT from the post of operations manager at Kelvin Central Buses in Motherwell, having worked for the former Kelvin Scottish since its formation in 1985 and through its merger with Central Scottish in 1989.

He was assistant traffic manager with Scottish Omnibuses Ltd, Edinburgh until re-organisation of the Scottish Bus Group, having previously worked with W Alexander & Sons (Midland) in Falkirk. Before embarking on a career in the industry in 1980, Mr Campbell was a graduate of Edinburgh University and worked as a SOL driver while a student.

● The complete management team is headed by Colin Smith as md. Its other members are: Tom Mathieson, previously general manager at Midland and now finance director for the three companies; William McCracken as engineering director; and Gordon Curlett, previously commercial manager, steps up to become general manager at SMT.

Nisbet gets TPA post

TRANSPORT consultant Oscar Faber TPA has recruited Andrew Nisbet as an associate to work in its Edinburgh office. He is a former planning manager with Strathclyde PTE and chief engineer with Strathclyde Buses.

Marketing at Maunsell

RICHARD Hankin has joined the board of G Maunsell & Partners and assumes responsibility for marketing. He takes over from Ken Boam who will now concentrate on the management of the Birmingham office and the development and expansion of the company's repair and maintenance business.

▼ Manufacturing

Tonks is works manager at re-manufacture plant

WOLVERHAMPTON-based engine re-manufacturer ActionForm Ltd has appointed Oliver Tonks works manager, responsible for production, inspection and testing of the high-quality range of Leyland engines currently being produced.

Mr Tonks, 23, is son of ActionForm managing director Peter Tonks. He has five years experience with Mercedes-Benz as a qualified technician and is a member of the Federation of Engine Re-manufactuers.

▼ Manufacturing

Pair become statutory directors at Berkhof

ERIC Vanlauwe and Tom Wiersma have become statutory directors of the Berkhof Group; Mr Vanlauwe as general director and Mr Wiersma as finance director.

Mr Vanlauwe has been commercial director since the end of 1986 and Mr Wiersma joined the board in 1992. The group, which also owns Jonckheere of Belgium, is the largest coach and bus builder in The Netherlands.

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1993 K DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
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1993 K DAF MB230LT Van Hool Alizee 'H', 57R
1992 J DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1992 J DAF MB230LB Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1992 J DAF MB230LT Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1991 H DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1990 G DAF MB230LT Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1990 G DAF MB230LT Van Hool Alizee 'SH', 53R/Toilet
1989 F DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 53R

1989 F DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1989 F DAF MB230LT Plaxton 3500, 53R
1989 F DAF MB230LT Plaxton 3500, 51R/Toilet
1989 F DAF MB230LB Plaxton 3500, 53R
1989 F DAF MB230LB Plaxton 3500, 51R/Toilet
1989 F DAF DHTD Duple 320SL, 51R/Toilet
1989 F DAF SB220 Optare Delta 2 Door 37 Luggage Pens.
1988 E DAF SB2300 Van Hool Alizee, 51R/Toilet
1988 E DAF SB2300 Duple 340SL, 53R
1988 E DAF MB230LT Plaxton 3500, 49R/Toilet
1988 E DAF MB230LB Plaxton 3500, 53R

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1986 D DAF MB200FL Plaxton 3500, 49R/Toilet
1989 F VOLVO B10M Plaxton 3200, 53R
1990 G SCANIA K93 Van Hool Alizee, 55R
1986 C LEYLAND TIGER 245 Duple 340, 51R/Toilet
1987 D LEYLAND TIGER 245 Duple 340, 53R
1987 E LEYLAND TIGER 245 Plaxton 3200, 57
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